THE NATURAL HISTORY OF EVIL

ADAM GOWANS WHYTE

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"Ici-bas, rien n'est complet que le malheur."

—BALZAC.

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BY

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PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to establish a new point of view in regard to the problem of evil. We are accustomed to look to evolution for the key to the origin of the solar system, the unfolding of life-forms, the constitution of man, and the development of human society with its religions, customs, and political structure. Countless things which were once obscure or inexplicable become clear and comprehensible when they are given their place in the web of natural evolution.

It is rather curious that so useful a principle has not been applied more directly to one of the most ancient and baffling of questions—the question of the origin, growth, and control of the element of evil in human life. Many books have been written on the evolution of religions, which are attempted explanations and cures of evil, and on the evolution of moral ideas, which embody the perfection which mankind hopes to reach in this world or the next. Specific evils, such as war, drink, prostitution, and poverty, have also been discussed in the same way as a medical treatise deals with consumption or any other particular disease. But little has been said on the broad subject of evil, treated as a phenomenon in natural history.

For this anomaly we have to thank the theological tradition which places evil among the deepest mysteries,

far beyond the reach of human understanding. In the following pages an effort is made to show that the existence of evil is no more mysterious than any other manifestation of the energies which have shaped the world. Evil is seen to be an inevitable by-product of the process by which the human rose from the animal. The primal curse was laid upon the seed of Adam when the first speck of protoplasm was born from the womb of Nature.

In the light thus thrown upon the source of evil and its relation to other phases of the evolution of man we discover a new element of hope in dealing with the practical problems of evil. Knowledge is the first requisite to the successful treatment of any difficulty which confronts us; and if this book proves that an authentic natural history of evil can be compiled, and that it leads to measures of relief from the burden of suffering, its purpose will be fully attained.

I

THE PROBLEM

In one of the rural counties of England there is a cross-roads known to the natives as the "Wooden Babylon." Strangers directed there look for some conspicuous landmark, and are puzzled to find nothing suggestive of Babylon, nothing wooden except a prosaic sign-post. Once upon a time, however, a landmark did exist, in the form of a timber cottage, where a harlot lived. Although she is long dead and every fragment of her home has vanished, the Spirit of Evil survives in the quaint sarcasm of a name.

It is a melancholy and most instructive thought that, had this woman been an angel of goodness, she would never have been immortalized by her neighbours. Evil, both in the concrete and in the abstract, is one of the most fascinating things in the world. While we all strive to root it out and crush it for ever, it retains a glamour which is absent from every form of Good. In the abstract, Evil is the greatest of mysteries, the most insoluble element in the riddle of existence. In the concrete it supplies the dramatic element of life. One has only to visit a theatre or a kinematograph show, to read a newspaper, a novel, a history, or a biography,

in order to realize how the attention of average folk is arrested by the immoral and the criminal. The phenomenon is so commonplace that we are apt to overlook it. As children we play games of battle, murder, and sudden death; and as adults not every one of us grows out of the early habit. These things, we say by way of apology, are an integral part of life, and all life is interesting; but the apology does not quite cover the appeal made to the secret springs of our nature by the Chamber of Horrors.

In this matter the Puritan town described in *The Scarlet Letter* is an index to the whole world. Hester Prynne was an object of contempt and derision; but she owned an hypnotic quality unrivalled by the greatest of those who outlawed her. And in the end her very presence acquired a healing power, not by reason of her service to the sick, but by virtue of the shameful brand she wore.

The threads of evil are, in fact, so closely woven into the human fabric that they are sometimes looked upon as inevitable. God himself, we are told, could do no other. This is not pessimism; it is philosophic resignation. Nevertheless the human spirit has never acted upon such a theory. It has perpetually demanded why evil should exist; it has persistently sought to discover how it may be eliminated. Every religion is an attempted answer to the *why*, and also in many cases to the *how* as well. Most of the answers may be unsatisfactory enough; some of those once fashionable are, indeed,

bankrupt; but they bear witness to the unconquerable determination of humanity to remould the sorry scheme of things nearer to the heart's desire.

That it is a sorry scheme of things no honest man will deny. Whether we survey the history of mankind in the mass or study individual experience in ourselves and our neighbours, the dominant feature seems often to be the suffering imposed upon every sentient being. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth; man is born to sorrow, as the sparks fly upwards. In these familiar phrases we find the essence of a multitude of verdicts on life wrought by men of all ages in a common agony of mind. Existence, it would seem, is tolerable only because the soul of man becomes calloused against the poignant facts. To turn our eyes to the spectacle of the blood and cruelty and baseness which the past and present of our race afford; to open our ears to the cry of pain from innumerable victims of circumstance; to feel with undefended nerves the ceaseless thrill of agony in the heart of man—to do these things is to know despair. Small wonder is it that men look for relief to an eternity of absolute happiness in paradise, or to a Nirvana in which existence is sublimated to a mystical superiority over all sensation. Small wonder, too, that men who hold these to be illusions should look to Death itself as the one great compensation for Life:—

> This little life is all we must endure,
> The grave's most holy peace is ever sure;
> We fall asleep and never wake again.

Thus the Poet of Pessimism. But to others the prospect that their own torture will one day be stilled is not adequate compensation for the spectacle of human suffering. They view the world in the spirit of Winwood Reade's *The Outcast*, where the universe is pictured as a drama composed by a demi-god for the edification of his celestial peers. In a "review" of this creation a critical demi-god traces with pleasure the evolution of the earth from a cinder enveloped in cloud to a globe green with thriving vegetation and peopled with countless species of animals; he notes the appearance of Man on the scene, the slow unfolding of human civilization up to a culminating stage which, alas, is yet remote enough. "Finally war ceased; the malignant forces of Nature were subdued, vice and disease were eradicated, the earth became a pleasure garden, and men learnt to bear without repining a painless death in extreme old age." The critic assumes that "the moral purpose of this drama is to teach the doctrine of Improvement, and to illustrate that tendency to Progress which pervades the universe." But he asks how progress has been produced in the animated world :—

> We are almost ashamed to explain a law which, in its recklessness of life and prodigality of pain, almost amounts to a crime. In cold forethought, the Creator so disposed the forces of nature that more animated beings were born than could possibly obtain subsistence on the earth. This caused a struggle for existence, a desperate and universal war; the best and improved animals were alone able to survive, and so in time Evolution was produced.....By means of this same struggle for

existence, man was raised from the bestial state, and his early discoveries were made. Afterwards ambition of fame, and, later still, more noble motives, came into force; but that was towards the conclusion of the drama. At first every step in the human progress was won by conflict, and every invention resulted from calamity. The most odious vices and crimes were at one time useful to humanity, while war, tyranny, and superstition assisted the development of man.

Evil unhappily exists, and we do not condemn its employment in art. We are not in favour of those impossible dramas in which only the virtues are displayed. But we do condemn this confusion of evil and good, and maintain that nothing can be more immoral than to make crime the assistant of progress, and vice the seed of which virtue is the fruit.

Turning to Death, the critic notes that this "useful and perhaps indispensable appliance" has been used so immoderately that the earth is a vast slaughter-house. Moreover, "with a talent for torture which rouses our wonder only next to our disgust, the Creator has smitten the animated world, even to the insects, with numerous painful and lingering diseases, while the intellect is also afflicted with maladies peculiar to itself. The affections which at first would appear to afford some meagre consolation in the martyrdom of man are themselves too often the cause of mental pain and incurable despair."

What can be said for such a world?.....Who could view that melancholy Earth and those writhing masses of humanity, who could hear those agonizing cries, without a shudder of pain and a glow of honest indignation against the Author of

> such woes and wrongs?.....We know nothing of the Author, but if we should meet him at a future time shall be happy to hear what he can say to exonerate himself. We do not wish to be too hard upon a young beginner whose talents cannot be disputed, and we trust that this critique, which is not unkindly meant, in spite of its severity, will induce him to reform. When next he produces a world let it be one which we can take our wives and daughters to see, which will excite in the audience none but the nobler sentiments, and which also, we must add, will give us a more favourable impression of the character of its Creator.

Winwood Reade sheathes the cutting irony of this verdict by presenting it as the vision of a disordered mind; but it does indicate a sober philosophic view which is common to all ages of thought. In certain temperaments it leads to fatalism, to passive submission; but in others it is the spring of revolt and of the determination to give no quarter to evil. Anybody who believes that this is the best of all possible worlds, and acts up to his belief, must be at least neutral towards all reform. Anybody, moreover, who admits the imperfections of this world, but hopes that they will be adjusted in the next, cannot feel any overmastering impulse towards reconstruction on earth. "Thy will be done" is the formula of moral inertia. It has the same deadening effect as the Church's call upon us to be content with that state of life into which God shall be pleased to call us. Pessimism is the extreme of discontent; and in discontent resides the energy which carries humanity towards the ideal, ever receding, with which it might be content.

"Nature's insurgent son," therefore, must ever forward. And as he advances his outlook widens; he demands more from life; and he finds the world more complex, its problems more difficult to understand. All the more reason, therefore, for a close scientific study of those elements of evil which he desires to subdue. Religious systems, which embody theories of evil and offer a means of escape from evil here or hereafter, do not provide us with such a study. In spite of the endless catacombs of literature on the subject, we are still awaiting a systematic science of evil. Prophets and philosophers have treated evil as an entity—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; this entity springs full-grown from a god or demon, or is expressed as a principle in conflict with the equally cut-and-dried principle of good. Both good and evil were regarded as supernatural; and every speculation about the origin of evil was confined to tracing the superhuman hand that had planted the weed in the garden of life. To denounce evil, and to proclaim some pious alchemy which renders individuals immune to the effects of evil, was the limit of the contribution made by traditional religion to the science of moral pathology.

This failure was inevitable, even as would be the attempt of a botanist to describe the natural history of the oak without having ever seen the acorn or the sapling. Before the ways of evil can be made plain they must be studied from the standpoint of evolution. Just as we come to understand the brain and body of man by surveying their develop-

ment from the amœba stage through the fish, the reptile, the pro-mammal, and the ape-like forms up to human levels, so must we seek in the past the explanation of those elements in animal nature which we describe as evil.

It is true that a considerable study has already been made of moral evolution in animals and in men. But it has been mainly a descriptive study, telling us how sympathy developed, how mutual aid became organized, how certain types of useful behaviour were crystallized in customs or registered in conscience, and how moral ideas and ideals grew out of the experience of the race. There is also a mass of literature about specific "evils"—prostitution, drink, poverty, and war. Only occasionally, however, do we light upon the historical study of the inner mechanism which produces the results that are deplored. Moral cures are apt to display the same fault as medical treatment in the past; they deal with symptoms rather than with causes.

In the following pages an attempt is made to explain how man, as a product of evolution, comes to possess the impulses and the weaknesses which reveal themselves in evil. Nothing short of an encyclopædia would suffice to embody a full account of the natural history of evil; here the discussion is limited to salient features with a practical interest. The object is rather to express a point of view than to develop a complete theory of origin and development. And the point of view is simply that, if we want really to understand the meaning of evil and

to get the upper hand of it, we must leave the dreams of mystics and the dogmas of theologians on one side and search for the facts concealed at the very roots of human nature, set in the immemorial past.

II

RELIGIOUS SOLUTIONS—NON-CHRISTIAN

Before entering on the scientific study of evil, it is useful and interesting to review some of the speculations which religion offers as a solution of the mystery. Useful, because they show that neither from introspection nor revelation do we gain a clear and consistent picture of evil; interesting, because of the manifold ingenuity of their authors in reconciling evil and the divine government of the world.

Primitive man, who was a long way from searching out first causes, put all the ills of life down to the work of evil spirits. His world was peopled with ghostly beings akin to himself, some of them ancestral, some belonging to rivers, winds, animals, sun, moon, stars, and other salient things of nature. He had no difficulty in believing that the flood which swept away his hut or the tree which fell on him was actuated by the same motives as the enemy who lay in wait to slay him. His method of dealing with evil was to propitiate the unfriendly spirits with gifts and with magic—two sources which are not entirely disdained at the present day.

When animism developed into theism, attention was concentrated on tribal and other gods who held dominion over spirits as well as over men. The

tribal god was like the father of a family, laying down laws and meting out punishment. At this stage the gods were good or evil (or both good and evil), and warred among themselves in characteristic human fashion. The phenomena of night and day, winter and summer, storm and calm, formed the basis of the rich and complex mythology in which the ancient religions of Italy, Greece, Assyria, India, and other countries abound. Only the first glimmers of speculation about the origin of evil begin to appear; they arose definitely with the conception of a creative spirit.

As soon as the human mind became capable of forming such a conception, it was powerful enough to frame the question which, in one of its forms, was put to Robinson Crusoe by Man Friday. "Why God no kill the devil?" is the essence of the moral mystery of creation; and it transfuses every systematic religion from Hinduism to the latest of the new theologies.

It is perhaps stretching a point to describe Hinduism as a systematic religion, but at least it does foreshadow the dualism which so many religions adopt as the key to the existence of evil. There are three supreme gods in Hindu mythology—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. For practical purposes, however, there are only two, since Brahma is the self-existent creator of the universe, and does not appear to take any real concern in its present state. Vishnu is the great preserver of life, existing in a state of divine repose, yet approachable by prayer and sacrifice. At critical periods he descended to the world in

various incarnations (of which Krishna was one) to set the world right. Siva is the destroyer, the controller of the vast machinery which sweeps away millions of creatures and replaces them with others; naturally, therefore, his worshippers seek to propitiate him. Associated with each of these deities is a host of lesser gods and demons, many of them absorbed from the superstitions of people among whom Hinduism has been introduced.

This dualism becomes clear and pure in Zoroastrianism. Somewhere about 1000 B.C. Zoroaster proclaimed what Dr. L. H. Mills describes as "the purest and most philosophical conception of the Deity the world has ever seen." God was "the Wise One," or the "Great Creator," whose attributes were Love, Grace, and Piety, and who blessed the faithful believer with an immortality begun on earth and continued in a heaven of good thoughts, words, and deeds. Against this benign God stood one evil spirit, the prototype of the Scriptural Satan; and the whole duty of man was to aid the spirit of good in its conflict with the spirit which actually created the elements of moral and physical evil. In this case God was doing his best to "kill the devil," but was unable to do so, since without evil in the world there could be no good.

To Zoroastrianism belongs the credit of being the first religion to replace a multitude of devils with the conception of one original evil spirit. "We have," remarks Dr. Mills, "what seems an actual theological dualism: two spirits—one a God creating all that is good, and the other an evil Being creating

all evil. This can be accounted for only on the supposition that the authors of the conception found the problem of the origin of evil too formidable to be settled by the supposition that there are a multitude of subordinate evil powers who superficially disturb our happiness. Those early philosophic minds reached a conclusion very similar to that reached by some modern doctrinaires—viz., that God Himself could not have obviated the troubles that befall us; that there could be no good without them; and, strange to say, this remotely ancient conception seems to have given the hint which developed the philosophy of contrast, as I would call it."

This "philosophy of contrast" is well expressed in another ancient Persian religion—Sufism. To the Zoroastrian, light is in eternal conflict with darkness; to the Sufi, darkness does not truly exist; it is merely the negation of light. "God desireth to be known," says the Sufi; "things are known only through their opposites; God is good; therefore he can only be known by the appearance of evil. The mystery of evil is therefore identical with the mystery of creation." This, however, is not the end of Eastern subtlety as expounded by the mystical Sufi. God is Absolute Being as well as Absolute Good; therefore evil is Not-Being as well as Not-Good; therefore evil is essentially an illusion—unreal, false, impermanent. Thus does ancient Sufism join hands with modern "Christian Science."

Thus also does the Eastern mind seek to escape

from a philosophical difficulty in a smoke-cloud of words. Occasionally, as in Buddhism, it rises above the clouds to an ethereal region where all connection with the tangible things of earth is lost. The Western mind, which generally demands that ideas shall bear some relation to facts, finds a good deal of difficulty in grasping the essence of Buddhism as a theory of existence, although the Buddhist may retort that Karma and Nirvana are more readily explained than transubstantiation or the "sin against the Holy Ghost." Karma is described by Rhys Davids as "an airy nothing"; and many scholars have puzzled themselves and their readers over the precise meaning of Nirvana. For our purpose, however, it is sufficient to touch on the main elements of Buddhism as a form of pious pessimism.

"Alike for those who for To-day prepare, and those that after a To-morrow stare," Buddhism bears a message that the hope of happiness is a delusion. Each generation is, by a law from which there is no appeal, the heir to all the vices as well as the virtues of its predecessors. "The result of what a man is or does is held, not to be dissipated, as it were, into many separate streams, but to be concentrated together in the formation of one new sentient being—new, that is, in its constituent parts and powers, but the same in its essence, its being, its doing, its *Karma*." To the Buddhist the "individualized and individualizing force of Karma" lies at the root of all evil. In his "four Noble Truths" concerning sorrow, its cause, its suppres-

sion, and the path leading to its extinction, Gautama declares that everything distinctive of individual existence (birth, desire, disease, death, and so on) is full of suffering and sorrow; that the delusion of self and the lust of life are the origin of all suffering; that sorrow and suffering will be overcome only if this lust of life is destroyed; and that to accomplish this end a man must follow the "Noble Path" of a virtuous and thoughtful life. By meditation and discipline the Buddhist saint ascends the Path to the conquest of Karma and the attainment of Nirvana.

It is impossible to give a clear and concise definition of Nirvana. The Buddhist scriptures furnish many allusive descriptions, of which the following is more or less typical: "They who, by steadfast mind, have become exempt from evil desire, and well trained in the teachings of Gautama; they, having obtained the fruit of the fourth Path, and immersed themselves in that ambrosia, have received without price, and are in the enjoyment of Nirvana. Their old Karma is exhausted, no new Karma being produced; their hearts are free from the longing after future life; the cause of their existence being destroyed, and no new yearnings springing up within them, they the wise are extinguished like this lamp." Rhys Davids describes it as "the extinction of that sinful, grasping condition of mind and heart which would otherwise, according to the great mystery of Karma, be the cause of renewed individual existence.....Nirvana is therefore the same thing as a *sinless, calm state of mind;* and

if translated at all may best, perhaps, be rendered 'holiness'—holiness, that is, in the Buddhist sense: *perfect peace, goodness, and wisdom.*"

The peace, perfect peace of Buddhism is therefore something different from the immortal life to which the Christian looks forward. It is neither annihilation nor the condition of perfect bliss in a spiritual lotus-land that it is often assumed to mean. It is a metaphysical conception in which personal existence becomes non-existence without ceasing to be existence. For our present purpose the main thing to recognize in this puzzling and obscure doctrine is that it implies the bankruptcy of life as we know it. Only by escaping from life can the living achieve happiness. Evil is not explained or cured; it is merely accepted as a fundamental fact of existence, which is to be avoided by each man rising to a mystical height where, to quote the *Dhammapada*, "sufferings fall off from him, like water drops from a lotus leaf."

III

RELIGIOUS SOLUTIONS—CHRISTIAN

To the ordinary man, who likes something tangible even in his speculations about the unknowable, it is a relief to turn from Sufism, Buddhism, and Hinduism to the religions which arose in the nearer East and spread westward in the different varieties of Christianity. There is a refreshing matter-of-factness about the systems built up on the Fall of Man and his redemption by sacrifice. Some of the Christian creeds are almost as precise and realistic as a company prospectus, although they deal with a scheme which is essentially incomprehensible.

Western religion, as expressed in these creeds, boldly throws the blame for all the evil in the world upon man himself. God, the creator, made Adam in his own image—or, as the official Roman phraseology puts it, constituted him in "holiness and justice"—and Adam, by transgressing the commandment of God in Paradise, incurred death and captivity under the power of the devil, becoming changed, "in body and soul, for the worse." This unfortunate "prevarication of Adam" involved his entire posterity, who are therefore born in sin; the guilt of this original sin can be remitted only by baptism, and mankind can be redeemed only through the Creator's "most beloved only-begotten Son, our

Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, won Justification for us by his most holy Passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father." For those of us who are "justified" there awaits eternal bliss in heaven, after a period of detention in Purgatory; and for those of us who are not justified, eternal punishment.

Such is the Holy Catholic faith, which, unless a man honestly and firmly believe, he cannot be saved. Every formal Christian creed is a variation on this theme. Both the Thirty-Nine Articles, in which every Anglican clergyman unfeignedly believes, and the Catechism upon which the Church of Scotland still rears the unhappy youth of that country, echo from remote angles the same gospel. Whatever we may think of it as a theological system, it is surely hopeless as a solution for the problem of evil. From the days of Augustine it has been the seed of innumerable controversies, which have had no other result than to swell the record of religious strife, persecution, and bloodshed. If the soul of Adam does exist somewhere, in limbo, purgatory, or hell, it must occasionally reflect that among the worst results of man's first transgression were the struggles over what it all meant—over original sin, free-will, predestination, effectual calling, justification, adoption, and sanctification. Quoting Milton, "In me all Posterity stands curst," he would see in this nightmare of metaphysics the most preposterous phase of the vengeance of God.

Almost the whole of the vast literature on this subject, full of venom and of gloomy superstition, has been swept away, and is forgotten by every one save the historian who glances over it in disdainful curiosity. A system of doctrine, which rears the illimitable pyramid of human evil upon the apex of an unfortunate First Man who ought to have known better, would have collapsed through its own absurdity at a very early stage had it not been bolstered by an unquestioned belief in the literal truth of the Bible. The Bible itself is an Adamic pyramid; and if one believes its pages there is no escape from the paradox that the First Man's crime was wiped out by a crime against the God who created him. As Bishop Ken wrote, with quite unintentional humour:—

> What Adam did amiss,
> Turned to our endless bliss;
> O happy sin, which to atone,
> Drew Filial God to leave his throne.

When a more rational view of the Bible began to prevail, men became aware that the only element of truth in the old disputes was the conviction of every sect that all the others were wrong. Later, when the scientific view of the origin of man replaced the legend of the Garden of Eden, efforts were made to re-cast the Christian doctrine of evil in the mould of evolution. For all these efforts the best that can be said is that the more true they are to the mould the less akin are they to Christianity. Taken together, they result in such a confusion of compromises that no one can offer an accepted

definition of Christianity or declare what really is, at the moment, the Christian view of evil. It would need a volume to give even a summary account of all the fashionable phases of Christian faith; and by the time the volume was completed many of them would have been discarded. The utmost that can be done is to indicate one or two main trends of thought on the problem of evil.

On one hand it is admitted that the earth is so full of horror and unmerited suffering as to be a massive denial of God. The denial is withdrawn only when the evil of this life is considered in relation to the life to come. "The balance of pleasure and pain, of felicity and unhappiness, in the individual life cannot," writes the Rev. F. R. Tennant, "be struck so long as we confine our thought to experience of the present world alone..... I repeat again that the problem of evil cannot be adequately solved by the Theist, apart from the hope of the life to come."

Observing the world thus morally bankrupt, the pious mind draws upon the infinite balance of happiness in heaven. Incidentally it finds satisfaction in contemplating the converse in hell; those who look to the next world to adjust the balance of earthly existence are as much concerned that the wicked who have prospered here should be cast down as that the good who have suffered should be exalted. The security for this ultimate adjustment of good and evil is not, however, so good as it was in the days when people could locate the two regions and define the occupations by which the saints

whiled away the tedium of eternity, and by which the sinners were prevented from forgetting their sins. There is nowadays a decent conspiracy to ignore hell; and it is possible to read a good deal of modern theology without learning anything about heaven. But even if we assume that the entire human race will eventually reach a state of spiritual perfection, can we discover in this attainment any valid excuse for the age-long agonies that preceded it? To regard the world as so bad that heaven is a necessary atonement for its evils is to strain the belief of common-sense folk in the omnipotence of God. What really happened, of course, was that man created heaven as an anodyne for his sufferings on earth.

Another form of Christianity wipes out the debit of evil by a draft, not upon eternity, but upon religious optimism. It gives a philosophic rendering to the Salvationist's ecstasy: "Now I'm happy all the day....." The existence of evil is not denied, nor is it merely tolerated until it can be forgotten in perpetual hozannas. It is boldly treated as an essential instrument of good. "Popular Christianity," says the Reverend Charles Shebbeare, "has unfailingly drawn the conclusion that even the worst evils are all 'for the best.'" "Evil," says the Rev. J. R. Cohu, "is here, not as a thing that ought to be, but as a thing that ought not to be, and yet must be, because its presence is conducive to a greater excellence of moral personality than is possible or conceivable without it."

These statements by two more or less typical

modern theologians remind one of Cardinal Bellarmin's sardonic summary of Calvinistic doctrine: "God is the author of sin; God really sins; God is the only sinner; sin is no sin at all." Since evil at its worst is all for the best, it is merely the illusion of evil. Much ingenuity is exercised by theologians around this paradox. One popular solution is that evil is merely incidental; the world *as a whole* is good although many isolated things are evil. But this suggestion that the good cancels out the evil in the complete equation of life is hardly consistent with the view that we can attain good only through evil. If, however, the soul is perplexed by being called upon to believe that an omnipotent and all-loving Creator made the world so that evil was a necessary element in it, and could not have made things otherwise, there is a soothing word at hand. God's ways are inscrutable.

In all these efforts to represent evil as a negative item which is overwhelmed by the positive items of divine good, or as the bitter root from which the sweet flower of virtue springs, it is moral evil which is generally kept in view. The argument runs as follows: Moral perfection is the object of existence; no man can become a saint unless he has been tempted and has conquered; therefore temptation —which includes all the wiles of the devil—is essential to moral perfection.

There are two large assumptions in this chain of reasoning—first, that God created the universe in order to achieve moral perfection; and second, that God himself could not have achieved this end by

any path save that of moral evolution as it has taken place on earth. We may grant these two assumptions, but still we are confronted by a colossal difficulty. Nature, which sows a million seeds that one may grow into a plant, is not more prodigal than the God who makes innumerable victims of war, tyranny, and every phase of crime, in order that a few saints may emerge. If the majority of men and women who have existed since the dawn of humanity had been even passable imitations of moral perfection, there might have been something to say for the theory that immorality is rather a tonic than a poison. Taking the facts of human life as they are, the dreadful game does not seem worth the visionary goal. It is more reasonable to treat the Great War as a punishment inflicted by a vengeful Jehovah upon nations for their sins than to regard it as a healthy discipline designed in infinite love for the uplifting of pilgrim saints.

The difficulty of reconciling reality with Christian optimism is increased when we come to consider other forms of evil than those under the heading of Sin. Famine and pestilence do not bear any obvious relation to the alleged moral purpose of creation. Like disasters, they extinguish saint and sinner with ruthless impartiality. The processes of disease, moreover, show a complicated ingenuity, which may be a proof of supernatural design, but gives no assurance of supernatural affection for human well-being. Can the Christian, when he reviews the multitude of toxins and studies their subtle methods of warfare, honestly regard them as

an army of God? Once upon a time he could. Disease, premature death, and all other calamities, were "visitations"; and the sufferer was enjoined to echo Job's words: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Acting on this principle, his utmost protest was a prayer. God's way being right, it was man's duty to submit.

The pit of fatalism thus opened up is rather ingeniously skirted by some theologians of to-day. The Rev. F. R. Tennant, for example, treats physical ills as "inevitable by-products" which are not willed as such by God. "I have been contending," he goes on, ".....that perhaps no form of evil, neither the pain of cancer or tetanus, nor the affliction of being born with mind or body diseased, nor the devastating effect of storm or earthquake, is superfluous—that is to say, a logically unnecessary element of the cosmos such as a moral order in general requires. It is, at any rate, for the impugner of theism to prove that some particular form of evil is in this sense a superfluity."

Modern man, however, looks forward to an existence in which disease will be abolished or at least efficiently controlled. The recently discovered cure for tetanus and the researches into the causation of cancer and lunacy will not be abandoned because these horrors are "a logically necessary element of the cosmos such as a moral order in general requires." Famine and "acts of God" in general are also under sentence of banishment. On the assumption that God wove these strands through the fabric of life for his own good purpose, it is

clearly impious to extract them; nevertheless the dilemma does not daunt the theologian, even though he be not so subtle as the Rev. F. R. Tennant. In order to escape from it, he invents a kind of limited-liability God.

This God is bound, as much as we are, by the laws of nature. He cannot square the circle, undo the past, or perform anything that is impossible, according to these laws. (Miracles, it will be observed, are quietly dropped out of the latest theology.) He cannot, therefore, abolish evil, except by fighting it and conquering it; thus we get a picture of a Deity who is not a mere spectator or judge of the human struggle against evil, but is himself involved in it, suffering when we suffer, rejoicing when we are glad, in a kind of cosmic partnership. H. G. Wells has done his best to popularize this "invisible King"—with a visible lack of success. As a solution for the problem of evil, a God who feels every pang that his creatures endure and who grieves when they fail, in their God-given weakness, to bear the burden that God's holy ordinance has placed upon them, is surely less convincing than any other deity ever conceived.

Modern Christianity, in short, leaves the problem exactly where ancient Christianity found it. No formula has yet been discovered to reconcile the perfection of heaven with the imperfection (to say the least) of earth. The nearest approach to a rational view is the admission that evil is a mystery that no mortal mind can penetrate. Treated as a manifestation of divine love, evil is

a super-puzzle, and not all the argument of centuries about it has led us to the secret. Treated as a natural phenomenon, its origin and development are as clear as any familiar phase of evolution. Whatever mystery resides in it is the ultimate mystery of all existence, shared alike by a grain of sand and by the illimitable universe.

IV

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

In one respect the prevalent Christian theory of evil is sound enough. Given the world as it is, suffering is inevitable. And as all evil translates itself into suffering, physical or mental, this means that evil is in the very blood of life. The whole drama of pain and misery on earth was instinct in the first act of creation; the long agony of sentient being was implied in the earliest speck of protoplasm evolved from inanimate matter.

The instrument upon which evil plays is the nervous system. Every feeling of pleasure or pain registers itself through a nerve tremor transmitted to the complex organization of nerve cells known as the brain. Sensations pour in upon the brain from eyes, ears, mouth, skin, and internal organs; and each sensation has a peculiar quality which depends upon the nature of the disturbance, the condition of the nerves which transmit it, and the reaction which the brain makes to the nervous impulse that reaches it.

With a sensitive mechanism of this kind, the liability to suffer seems to be bound up with the capacity to enjoy. Nothing is more familiar than the way in which a pleasant sensation passes by almost imperceptible steps into pain. The warmth

of the sun revives us at dawn, but oppresses us at noon. The notes of music which delight us and awaken a whole world of beautiful emotions become an exquisite agony if they move ever so little above or below the harmonious rate of vibration. A strong appetite is almost an exhilarating thing, but it grows into the pangs of hunger and thirst. The constant repetition of an almost neutral sensation, like that of the fall of a drop of water upon the skin, becomes a diabolical torture. Even laughter itself, the liveliest of all manifestations of joy, leads to a painful hysteria if not controlled. And the more passionate pleasures, like those of love, are always apt to rise to the height of suffering; in the pathological condition we find that the summit of ecstasy is reached through the infliction of pain.

It is possible, of course, to imagine a nervous system that would convey and record only pleasurable sensations. Such a mechanism would be like a wireless telegraph receiver which responds only to waves of a certain length, or a tuning-fork which vibrates only to sounds of a particular pitch. But our nerves are blessed, or cursed, with a wide range of response. The only limit granted by nature is that a stimulus too violent or too prolonged leads to insensibility or death. Under an excessive stress the mechanism breaks down; and for this ultimate mercy we may return thanks.

On the other hand, it is a melancholy law of our constitution that those who are capable of feeling the keenest joy are those who experience the most intense suffering. So much more frequent are the

occasions of pain that these highly-strung people may be pardoned for envying the placidity typified by the cow chewing the cud beneath a shady tree. They are seldom convinced that the rainbow heights compensate for the sombre depths; and amid the fitful fever of their lives their most abiding comfort is to know that some day they will sleep well.

The reason why our nerves are such catholic conductors of feeling becomes clear when we consider how the nervous system has evolved. This study will also be useful in lighting up another phase of the problem of evil—the conflict between habit, inherited or acquired, and the power of control.

The lowest organisms have no nerves. At the humblest known level they are specks of living matter, with no visible structure, and no power beyond that of absorbing food, growing, and dividing into two similar parts. A little higher up we come upon the power of movement. The Amœba thrusts out portions of the envelope of its single cell, and thus contrives to swim along and to capture food. At the beginning of the next stage, when several cells form a cluster, all parts seem equally fitted to perform such elementary functions; but at a more advanced stage in evolution a division of labour among the cells begins to show itself. In cup-shaped organisms, which appear to be hollow globular colonies which have doubled in upon themselves, the inner cells take the work of digestion and the outer cells specialize on movement or sensation.

As the prime object of cell activity is to obtain food, the most useful place for sensitive cells would be at the rim of the cup. When the cup form develops into the continuous tube which affords the ground-plan of every animal from the worm up to man, the rim becomes the mouth, the inner part of the cup becomes the digestive tract, and the outside forms a muscular envelope. For such a mechanism to work effectively it is clearly necessary that the various parts shall be in connection with each other; and this connection is afforded by sensitive cells which gradually form the definite channels of communication we call nerves. These channels will link together not only the digestive and muscular parts, but also the cells which have become sensitive to light, smell, gravitation, and other external forces. The picture of the animal organism at this stage is something like that of a rural community, with the baker, the carrier, and the other members kept in touch with each other by a simple telephone system.

As a telephone system increases in size and complexity, exchanges have to be established at various points to collect and distribute the calls. A similar stage can be recognized in the development of the nervous system, when nerve centres or ganglions are formed to collect the various stimuli travelling inwards along the nerves and to dispatch the resulting messages along other nerves which control organs of movement or digestion. It is not difficult to see that in the worm-like arrangement, with a mass of sensitive cells near the mouth, we have an

arrangement which suggests the grouping of nerve tracts along the body towards a central exchange in the region of the mouth. In other words, we have the first rough sketch of the spinal cord and the brain. For example, in the lamprey, which is a primitive fish-like animal, the spinal cord ends in a thicker portion which forms the rudiment of the brain. In the fishes themselves the brain is divided into several parts, each with its own functions. The higher we rise in the scale of life the more complex becomes the nervous system as a whole; but it is by the elaboration of the brain in particular that we measure the stage of evolution to which an animal has attained.

The brain is, in fact, like a central telephone exchange, where incoming calls are received and carried forward as outgoing calls along selected lines. Or it is like the General Headquarters of an army, receiving intelligence from many sources on all sorts of subjects—the movement of enemies, food supply, the health of different sections of the forces, casualties, the weather, and what not—and dispatching orders which set in motion regiments or companies, the army service corps, the hospital staffs, and so on. The human brain is the meeting-ground of a multitude of sensations from eye, ear, tongue, skin, and the digestive organs; and, according to the nature of these sensations and to the constitution of the brain itself, impulses are sent out along special nerve channels to the muscular or other organs of the body.

The most remarkable thing about this process is

that it is so largely automatic. Elaborate and complex changes take place throughout our body every instant of our lives, and we are not aware of them. The activity of our digestive organs, involving most intricate performances on the part of various glands, goes on without our being conscious of, or having any direct control over, the major part of it. Yet every step involves a series of messages along ingoing nerves to certain ganglions, and responsive outgoing messages which cause glands to secrete fluids or the intestines to move the food onwards. Breathing and the beating of the heart go on while we are asleep or are unconscious in illness. And even movements which are not essential to our existence, some of which we may have learned late in life, are, if habitual, often performed without our "knowing" what we are doing. To revert to the telephone simile, innumerable calls are "put through" on automatic exchanges where there is no intelligent operator.

Another important fact is that movements which, when first attempted, are made with a strong effort of will and with the consciousness wide awake may become automatic. In learning the piano, for example, the first links between certain marks on a page and the pressing of certain notes on the instrument are forged with difficulty, if not with tears. After a long period of training and practice the pupil is able to play most complicated pieces while his attention is elsewhere—engaged perhaps in conversation or reverie. Should his mind happen to revert to what he is playing, the sudden

intrusion of conscious control may interrupt the playing.

The waves of our nervous life are thus continually rising above the level of consciousness or sinking below it, while beneath the waves lie the deep regions of unconscious life. Both conscious and unconscious nerve action are phases of the same phenomenon. Consciousness is like the flower on the stem, the bright petals being merely modifications of the green leaf. In the individual human being consciousness dawns out of unconsciousness so slowly that one can hardly detect the change. And in the evolution of man from lower types of life it is likewise impossible to say that here or here is the dividing line between the two kingdoms. Fishes or reptiles may have a glimmer of consciousness, or they may be as purely automatic as an oyster; it is difficult to say positively one way or the other, although we can safely assert that they are well on the way to consciousness. Birds undoubtedly have it, and they have a well-developed cerebral cortex—that part of the brain which is associated with consciousness. Man takes his descent from the mammals, which show in their development a progressive advance in the cortex and a corresponding rise in the power of profiting by experience. There is no break in the slow unfolding of the powers of the conscious mind.

Consciousness, therefore, comes late in the evolution of mind; and as suffering depends upon it we must recognize that evil is a recent element in the history of life. At the same time, we can see how

it came to be an inevitable element. The conscious nerve, if one may use such a rough-and-ready phrase, is not different in kind from the unconscious nerve; and so we may expect the automatic action of the nerve in lower organisms to show some sign of the pleasure-and-pain duality of the conscious action of the nerve in higher organisms.

The sign is clear enough. Movement in the unconscious animal must, in order to be useful, serve a double purpose. It must draw the organism towards what is good for it and withdraw it from what is harmful. Any organism which was not able to discriminate in this way could not survive. The power to draw back was no less useful than the power to stretch out and grasp. So deep-rooted is this reaction to what is "evil" for the animal that we find even the Amœba shrinking into a ball—"like a disturbed hedgehog," as Mr. McCabe describes it—under an abnormal chemical or mechanical stimulus.

The simplest living things are thus engaged in the same sort of Zoroastrian struggle as the higher and the highest animals. And the means used in all cases are essentially the same. The primitive irritability of the Amœba leads up to the sensitiveness of the animal with its highly-specialized nervous system, and to the capacity for intense consciousness, both of pleasure and of pain, displayed by man.

In this sense, as in so many others, "the first Morning of Creation wrote what the last Dawn of Reckoning shall read." The duality of action and,

later, of feeling was a direct result of the nature of the environment in which the organism found itself. Living things swam in a sea of mingled life and death; and the elements of death were multiplied when life began to prey on life. Given these desperate conditions, a species had only two ways of surviving. One was to improve its power of attaining the good and avoiding or protecting itself against the evil. The other was by a prodigal fertility which sacrificed millions that one might live. As evolution proceeded, the nervous power of response and adaptation increased, enabling the species to continue although its fertility diminished. The lowest organisms reproduce in almost incalculable numbers; the highest organisms substitute one or two offspring at a birth for multitudes. This progress, however, carries its penalty. It involves the organism in an incessant series of duties which carry with them necessities of labour, pain, and many violent emotions. In the highest animal the burden of suffering is greatest.

Reviewing this process, the *cui bono* of pessimism thrusts itself forward, and will not be denied. Does the end, typified by a nerve which thrills with agony as well as joy, compensate for the æons of destruction which led up to it? There are some to whom the budding rose is ample atonement for the death which nourishes its beauty; there are others to whom the very loveliness of such a flower, destined so soon to fade, darkens by contrast the mire from which it springs. But, whether we are eupeptic or dyspeptic in our view of life, the fact

comes home to us again that suffering is of the inmost essence of existence. All that the world has known and will yet know of sorrow and pain was latent in the first globule of protoplasm. Surely, if God be, as his latest worshippers declare, a Creator who feels even as his creatures feel, his august hand must have trembled when it shaped from the inanimate the original living thing?

Chapter V

THE EVOLUTION OF EVIL

The origin of evil may thus be traced to the development of sensitive tissue in an environment which is unfriendly as well as friendly to life. Up to this point, however, we have not done much more than localize the trouble. We have not followed the evolution of evil fully enough or closely enough to explain why the ills which man has to bear are so much worse than those endured by any of his animal relations.

The more elaborate and highly-strung nervous system of man has, of course, a great deal to do with his more acute and varied sufferings. Mentally, morally, and socially, mankind—modern, civilized mankind, that is to say—has an existence enormously more complex than that of the highest non-human animal; and in consequence our race knows immeasurably more of the bitter and the sweet of life than its ancestors.

The sensitiveness of the instrument is not, however, the only thing that counts. There is so much difference between ourselves and the rest of creation in point of suffering that we may almost deny the existence of evil before man appeared. Death there was in plenty, but death is not the greatest evil in the world. Fear was not unknown: the birds are

silent when the hawk hovers; the roar of the lion makes the jungle tremble; at the approach of a snake the victim is paralysed. Nevertheless, one must beware of reading into these signs of emotion more than the animal brain is capable of feeling. Many of the responses of "terror" are automatic, or accompanied by only a faint light of consciousness. The dog that howls at the moon is not so melancholy as the people who lie awake listening to him.

Taking wild nature as a whole, it has the advantage of being in tune with its environment. Although the path to that condition is bloody enough—each organism out of tune being ruthlessly slain—the result is true harmony. As Sir Ray Lankester says[1]: "In Nature's struggle for existence death, immediate obliteration, is the fate of the vanquished, while the only reward to the victors —few, very few, but rare and beautiful in the fitness which has carried them to victory—is the permission to reproduce their kind, to carry on by heredity to another generation the specific qualities by which they triumphed."

In their triumphs as in their failures animals are equally helpless, equally passive. The variations which doom their possessors to extinction or mark them out for survival are due to causes over which they have no power of control. It is only when we come to man that we find the faculty of altering the environment. Men are able to fashion things

[1] *The Kingdom of Man* (Watts), p. 7.

according to their own desire ; they create artificial conditions for themselves, and are continually bringing new factors into the equation of life.

To this power of initiative, represented by a brain which has the gift of imagination, forethought, and reasoning, we trace the glories of human achievement. To it also must we trace the manifold discords that come under the name of evil.

The burden that "Nature's insurgent son" assumed when, like Prometheus, he stole fire from heaven, is well described by Sir Ray Lankester[1] :—

> Civilized man has proceeded so far in his interference with extra-human Nature, has produced for himself and the living organisms associated with him such a special state of things by his rebellion against Natural Selection and his defiance of Nature's pre-human dispositions, that he must either go on and acquire firmer control of the conditions or perish miserably by the vengeance certain to fall on the half-hearted meddler in great affairs. We may, indeed, compare civilized man to a successful rebel against Nature, who by every step forward renders himself liable to greater and greater penalties, and so cannot afford to pause or fail in one single step. Or, again, we may think of him as the heir to a vast and magnificent kingdom who has been finally educated so as to fit him to take possession of his property, and is at length left alone to do his best ; he has wilfully abrogated in many important respects the laws of his mother Nature, by which the kingdom was hitherto governed ; he has gained some power and advantage by so doing, but is threatened on every hand by dangers and disasters hitherto restrained.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

These dangers and disasters are phases of evil. They imply suffering and premature death. And they are in practically every case a result of the discord which man has created between himself and his environment—using this word in its widest sense to include mental, moral, religious, social, economic, as well as merely physical elements. Every attempt to adjust things harmoniously in one direction leads to mal-adjustments in other directions. He is constantly mending, patching, and reshaping the fabric of his life, but he never manages to achieve a perfect fit. To this effort we give the name Progress, always hoping that some day we shall reach the crowning harmony.

As a concrete example of how the progressive changes brought about by man have led to trouble we may take the case of disease, which is one of the seven deadly evils of life.

Among animals living in a state of nature disease seems to be almost unknown. The rigour of the game of natural selection has been so keen that the mere existence of a victorious species is proof that no disease can seriously affect it. Any members of the species which might happen to be congenitally diseased would die without reproducing, and the attacks of parasites would strengthen the species by killing off the weak or conferring immunity on the survivors.

In the case of man this close adjustment of the organism to its surroundings, which represents the peace at the end of a war of exhaustion, can never take place. Every change he makes in his diet,

his habits, his houses, his occupations, and his position on the earth's surface, upsets the balance previously reached and creates the risk of a new disturbance to his health. Further, his discovery of methods for preventing diseases from being fatal leads to the survival of individuals who are liable to disease and certain to transmit the weakness to their offspring. Again, his ability to travel long distances at high speed has the unfortunate result that outbreaks of disease which might otherwise exhaust themselves in a limited area are carried round the globe. The epidemic of influenza in 1918–19 is a striking case in point, and the deadly ravages of the disease in Labrador—a region formerly so isolated that it had never before been visited by influenza—afford a typical example of the effect of a new element breaking in upon a comfortable adjustment between a group and its environment.

It is possible that we may, in time, attain a re-adjustment of the conditions of civilized life to the risk of disease. But at present these conditions are changing so rapidly, under the progress of many inventions, that the prospect of stability (which would be very like stagnation) is so remote as to be of no account. Salvation lies in learning more about disease and in utilizing our knowledge to prevent, limit, or arrest its attacks. Man may be, all unwittingly, the author of many of his bodily troubles, but he enjoys the power of gaining control over the scourges he has made for his own back. The problem is so vastly complex, and the number

of men engaged in studying it is relatively so small, that we are only yet at the beginning of a general solution. Yesterday disease was a visitation of God; to-day it is a something of whose elementary laws we have caught a few glimpses. To-morrow, let us hope, there will be wider recognition of the fact that, while war slays its thousands, disease slays its tens of thousands.

The case of disease is instructive also because of the light it throws upon the moral aspects of the problem of evil. Many of the ills that flesh is heir to are not due to an encounter with a new parasitic enemy or to some other novel influence from outside. They arise out of imperfections within the human body itself. We are accustomed to admire the wonderful adaptation of means to end, of organ to function, in the human body; but, as a matter of fact, any wild animal you choose to name is much better fitted for its work. When the ancestors of man rose into the upright position they threw out of gear a mechanism closely adapted to movement, digestion, and reproduction on all-fours. Many changes have taken place in the human frame to meet the new conditions, but they are not complete. There are difficulties in supporting the spine, leading to curvature and other troubles; difficulties in maintaining circulation through the veins at the lower end of the bowel, leading to hæmorrhoids; difficulties in supporting the weight of the intestines, leading to rupture; difficulties in carrying the embryo in an upright womb; difficulties in securing a strong arch to the instep of the foot. These and

many other imperfections remain although the process of adaptation has been going on since pre-human days. They are among the most striking proofs of our animal origin; and any one who desires a closer acquaintance with them could not have a better introduction than Professor Keith's little book on *The Human Body*.

We owe, in short, many of our physical sorrows to the legacy bestowed upon us by our animal parents. And we owe to the same cause a whole swarm of moral evils. Structure and habit are the passive and active phases of the same thing; and just as our bodies have been unable to fit themselves into the new conditions, so do our habits fail to reach the higher and ever higher standard set for them. Our ancestral habits, shaped through the patient ages of natural selection, were registered in a nervous system whose action, as we have seen, was largely automatic. We have inherited that nervous system unaltered in general plan though embellished with superior powers of control. Using these powers to establish novel conditions of existence, we have involved ourselves in a "defiance of Nature's pre-human dispositions." This was man's first rebellion, through which he was cast out of the paradise of perfect adaptation.

There are two classes of people who lament this fall: the pessimists, who consider life to be a burden, and the more cheerful folk who think that man would be happy enough if he "got back to Nature." The passion which seizes some of us for the Simple Life must be a reversion to a very

ancient tendency—the tendency which filled the primitive mind with foreboding when it saw a pioneer make fire, or heard him say to a venerable instinct, "Thou shalt not." In that commandment lie the whole of human greatness and nearly the whole of human suffering.

It is important to note that the instincts and tendencies which the human inherited from the pre-human were all beneficent. That is to say, they were all perfectly adapted to serve the one great end in view—the survival of the species. It was vital that the man-animal should have an overpowering instinct of self-preservation, that it should be fiercely egotistical, ruthless in attack, and cunning in defence, should blindly follow the sex-impulse, and should take by force what it desired. Its ways were primitive because its needs were primitive. Mingled with these "brutal" qualities were others which we regard with approval—a certain capacity for working together and for companionship, a definite affection for mate and offspring, a glimmer here and there of a feeling which would grow to compassion. But these are called "good" only because their development serves the ends of the human species to-day. For prehistoric man the other qualities, which we now call evil, were equally "good." The only difference is that the higher evolution of humanity demands their restraint or their suppression. Man has undertaken no less formidable a task than that of mastering the forces embedded in his very bones—forces which are there because they were once irresistible and necessary;

forces which have, under the stimulus of natural selection, acquired a momentum so great as to threaten continually to break completely through the frail tissue of restraint in which the will of man seeks to confine them.

Now and again, both in communities and in individuals, they do break through. Then the world trembles before the evil of war, and man is saddened by the tragedy of moral ruin.

Chapter VI

TYRANNY

What sort of being was Man when he set out on this moral pilgrimage? We can form no more than a shadowy mosaic of him, built up from a few fragments of bone and a variety of chipped flints, bound together with inferences drawn from his nearest animal relations and his most lowly human successors—the savages. Vague as every detail must be in a composition of this kind, we can, by drawing lines between the highest apes and the lowest men, arrive at a broad picture of primitive man.

His mode of life is our main concern for the moment.

The life of anthropoid apes, as summarized by Professor J. Arthur Thomson, "at many points touches the human.....they are in some ways like growing children, in other ways like savage men, though with more circumscribed limits of progress than either." They show a close bond of family life; they are able to build rude shelters; and they are accustomed to live in bands, held together more or less loosely by the love of company and the habit of common defence.

Among savages we find the same general features more highly developed. The family bond, instead

of being a mere matter of instinct, is regulated by definite customs; shelters have become huts; and the group has become the clan or tribe, with a ruling chief and a division of labour among the members. As flint implements, even the most primitive, are nearly always found in quantities, we are certain that prehistoric man lived in groups; at the later stages, represented by the shell and pottery heaps found in Denmark and by the stone-age lake dwellings in Switzerland, there are signs of larger and better organized groups. All the available evidence goes to show that primitive man evolved from a casual group stage to that of a social community.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the advantage of more and more systematic mutual aid to the human species contending against a host of animal enemies and physical dangers. In all the higher stages of evolution the power of working together is a most potent factor of survival. Nevertheless, in this very flowering of the herd instinct into conscious co-operation there lurked the seed of one of the greatest evils which has desolated humanity—the evil of tyranny.

Within the animal herd the response to leadership is instinctive. When the alarm is given every animal automatically makes the correct response of flight or of grouping for defence. Any individual which failed to make the response would be the first victim of a lurking enemy, and would therefore not transmit so fatal a tendency to be original. The herd does, in fact, realize the ideal of the

Roman Catholic Church, inasmuch as everybody in it is orthodox as a matter of course. This docility of spirit in matters concerning the herd is, however, quite compatible with aggressiveness in other directions. Fights of various sorts are a recognized escape from the monotony of obedience to the law of the herd. Successful attack and defence by the whole herd requires a certain amount of militant vigour in each member, and the same element of passion finds plenty of chances of showing itself in the domestic life of the herd. Contests between males during the breeding season are a familiar example, and they are justified by the part they play in selecting the most vigorous individuals for parentage.

We thus inherit from our animal forbears a double strain—the habit of submission, obedience, imitation; and the tendency to self-assertion, aggressiveness, and the use of our strength to overcome others. Both elements in the strain were vital to the great end in view—the survival of the species; but their relative values vary with circumstances. Bearing in mind that the main difference between man and his ancestors lies in the growth of brain power, it is interesting to trace how the change from the non-human to the human altered the inherited animal adjustment and made those two elements the father and mother of many evils.

The human brain is able to reason, to perceive the causes behind effects, to adapt means to ends, and to profit by experience in a far higher degree than the animal brain. These faculties are enjoyed,

more or less, by every man; but we have only to glance at our neighbours to realize that great mental power is the gift of the few. Our knowledge of prehistoric man shows that progress in invention was very slow; and the savage races of to-day afford further proof that the average brain is much better adapted to follow than to lead. The men who shaped the earliest flint implements, discovered how to use fire, fashioned the first garment, and founded the art of Tubal Cain must have been the rare geniuses of their time.

Rare likewise were the men of great will power and physical strength, who were able to impose their authority upon their fellows. At the same time, with the gradual rise in the level of mental ability, leadership became more and more necessary. The instinctive response of the animal was fading, and the conscious response of intelligence was taking its place. Without some central control, to which the wills of the majority would be subject, the unity essential to the survival of a group could not be secured. Without a master the community, the clan, the tribe, would have dissolved in anarchy.

The improvement in mental ability just referred to is, of course, in comparison with the animal standard. There is a wide difference between "conscious response" and "rational response." As Professor Carveth Read says[1]: "That the average human brain is poorly developed and always apt to

[1] *Natural and Social Morals*, 1909, p. 33.

become worse is the most important of all facts to remember. Apparently the cheapest way in which a tribe may obtain advantage over others has not been by general superiority in brains, but by variability, thereby obtaining more powerful leaders—balanced, of course, by imbeciles at the other end of the scale; but in early stages of civilization imbeciles do not long encumber the tribe. The result is that the civilization of every country depends upon a small number of eminent men: a few hundreds. Remove them, and society must disintegrate and resettle upon some more stable plan; that is, upon a plan that needs less ability to maintain it. Hence the rest of us must have instincts and dispositions impelling us to follow leaders: such as suggestibility, imitativeness, admiration. It is even probable that the early conditions of social organization have kept down the average independence of tribesmen and subjects, in order that they may the more readily follow leaders."

The part which the despot played in the childhood of humanity is illustrated in the condition of savage races to-day. Every savage community has its chief, who wields a power of life and death over his people until his strength decays and he is supplanted by another absolute ruler. In one sense, however, he is himself a slave. He holds sway on condition that he follows and enforces the immemorial customs of the tribe—customs which are in some ways the equivalent of animal instincts, and form a kind of legacy from previous tyrants who found them useful agents in promoting corporate

life : that is to say, in making people do his bidding. As Andrew Lang said of the Australian natives :—

> Instead of enjoying perfect personal freedom, as it would at first appear, they are governed by a code of rules and a set of customs which form one of the most cruel tyrannies that has ever, perhaps, existed on the face of the earth, subjecting not only the will, but the property and life, of the weak to the dominion of the strong. The whole tendency of the system is to give everything to the strong and old, to the prejudice of the weak and young, and more particularly to the detriment of the women. They have rules by which the best food, the best pieces, the best animals, etc., are prohibited to the women and young men and reserved for the old.

The "happy child of nature" is thus as much a myth as the sinless First Man. The course of evolution, operating on a being who possessed both the love of domination and the faculty of being dominated, led inevitably to the supremacy of the tyrant.

Between savagery and barbarism there is no essential difference in this respect; the change is marked solely by the higher organization and the wider range of the power of subjection. All the nation-builders and empire-makers of old were men who had the gift of inducing others to do their will. And it is important to note that they exercised their power over large masses of people through a descending series of lesser tyrants, each of whom was actuated by fear or self-interest in obeying the tyrant above him. Under this pyramid of oppression the lowest ranks, sheep-like in their lack of skill and initiative, were helpless. Born in subjec-

tion, they lived in slavery, and died in battles ordained by unseen leaders in causes of which the victims knew nothing.

The history of civilization is, in brief, the history of attempts to break down this hereditary bond between the will to power and the will to submission. Nothing better could be expected from the bond itself than a benevolent despotism. There are some political thinkers who argue that, indeed, nothing *could* be better for human nature than obedience to a wise autocrat who means well. They point—and with a certain amount of justice—to the cases where the attempt to establish liberty in place of tyranny has led through helplessness to a greater tyranny. The French Revolution gave rise to unspeakable excesses, followed by a new autocracy which threatened to dominate the world. The Russian Revolution of our own time has been anything but an unmixed blessing to the submissive millions who once worshipped a succession of Czars.

It is easy and plausible to found a political theory on such cases, just as it is to base a theory of sexual relations on the contention that woman is never happy until she has found her master. But there are forces at work which make even the wisest and kindest of despotisms no more than a stage in human progress. Mankind is slowly working towards freedom; and freedom means that men will create the order to which they are willing to submit. The degree to which they are able to do so is the measure of their standing in civilization.

It would be difficult to say more on this subject

without entering on the debatable ground of politics and attempting an estimate of the amount of good and evil inherent in various democratic constitutions. All that our present purpose demands, however, is a recognition of the fact that every effort to change the social structure is a cause of suffering. If we did not carry within us the legacy of habit bestowed upon us by both animal and human ancestors, we might adapt ourselves with facility to the changes imposed upon us by inventions, by enterprise, by the fresh thoughts and ideals which rise from study and inspiration. Our ingrained affection for the things that are familiar is always in sullen revolt against the appearance of an aggressive novelty; it represents, in fact, the element of stability which prevents the organization of society changing like a kaleidoscope and falling to bits in the process. We need the inertia of custom to hold us on a steady course; and at the same time custom, and our instinctive love of it, form the supreme obstacle to every upward movement.

The world would have less need of this inherited ballast if wisdom and forethought were not rare among men. To quote Professor Carveth Read again[1]:—

> It is not merely savages or barbarians who are incapable of impartial and comprehensive views of the public good, and of skilful co-ordination of individual efforts for the attainment of a maximum satisfaction; we are still in this condition, and must remain so for ages to come. In all concrete affairs,

[1] *Ibid*, p. 49.

> so much the more the more complex they are, and the less they admit of reduction to quantitative statements, human reason depends on the method of trial and error; and our safety depends upon our experimenting within certain limits of traditionary restraint.

This view of things, which shows humanity to be weak in vision and still tied by the leg to ancestral limitations, explains why it is that even under democracy we are not free from tyranny. The ancient evil of subjection lurks even in the ballot-box. Despots used to impose their will by terror and by force of arms; to-day the ambitious ruler appeals likewise to the weaknesses of men—their cupidity, their ignorance, their primitive emotions. The power by which a demagogue sways a multitude is not widely different from that by which a dictator reached his position of absolute authority. Under a despotic system rulers were thrust upon the people; under democracy the people choose the same type of man, and through him forge their own chains. The change is certainly an improvement, but it is still a long way from the ideal of freedom. Even to-day, in the most advanced countries, the individual is compelled to submit to obligations against which his spirit protests; he is a serf beneath the heels of a crowd instead of under the mailed foot of a person exercising a divine right of despotism.

It has already been noted that the tendency to dominate others shows itself in all grades of society. The lesser tyrant cringes to his superior and bullies his inferiors. There was a certain nation in arms

of which it was said that any man would cheerfully lick the boots of a dozen great men for the privilege of kicking a few dozen subordinates. With this two-phase disposition running through the social organization, it is inevitable that the evils of tyranny on the public scale should reproduce themselves on the smaller scale of private life.

There are one or two aspects of this domestic form of tyranny which are worth considering for the light they throw upon the development of human evil out of animal necessities.

The life-history of the human child is distinguished from that of the young of animals by the longer period during which care and education must extend before the individual is ready to fend for itself. Among civilized races, again, the period is longer than among savages, where the children are initiated to the order of manhood or womanhood at the age of puberty. We may, in fact, measure the standard of a species or a race by the length of time during which offspring are kept under the close protection of their parents. As the period lengthens, it involves greater demands on the mental capacity and the sympathies of the parents. Natural selection would, in its ruthless way, extinguish the families where the parental duties were neglected or scamped.

Essential as it was and is to survival, this element of parental control has been far from an unmixed blessing to the child. It placed helpless creatures at the mercy of individuals who had an ancestral tendency to tyrannize over anybody within their

power. There was a time, not so very long ago, when children were at the absolute disposal of their parents, and could be bought or sold with as little fuss as if they were cattle or furniture. Our pleasant marriage custom of "giving away" the bride is a reminder of the days when daughters had no free will in the most sacred and momentous of human relations. Jehovah's command to Abraham that he should sacrifice his son Isaac takes us further back—but in essence not so very far—in the history of parental rights. At the furthest human limit, verging on the wholly animal, we have such fathers as the Fuegian, who, in a fit of temper, but without compunction, dashed his child's brains out against a rock.

Such extreme cases fill us with violent repulsion; but we need not lay the flattering unction to our souls that we have completely freed ourselves from the tradition which, from the primary necessities of existence, placed unmeasured power in the hands of people who were not invariably fitted to use it with discretion. The records of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are an index, not to our fallen state, but to the slow and unequal adjustment which we have been able to make to changing conditions. Parental care nowadays demands an increasing amount of sympathetic insight, self-restraint, patience, and forethought from a nature in the roots of which lie embedded despotism, dogmatism, impulsiveness, and mental indolence. There is so much disparity between the treatment which children ought to receive and the

parental habits of the majority of people that the State has felt justified in stepping in to make an adjustment on its own account. In addition to protecting the body of the child from cruelty and also from exploitation in the labour market, the State has made elementary education compulsory, and has gone on to institute the medical inspection of school children, and in some cases to feed them.

The tendency at the present time is for State intervention to widen and deepen its control over children, thus weakening the domestic power and responsibility of parents. "In England and America," observes Dr. Westermarck (*The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*), "where political life is most highly developed, children's respect for their parents is at a particularly low ebb. Other factors, also inherent in progressive civilization, contributed to the downfall of the parental power—the extinction of ancestor worship, the decay of certain superstitious beliefs, and last, but not least, the spread of a keener mutual sympathy throughout the State, which could not tolerate that the liberty of children should be sacrificed to the despotic rule of their fathers."

Whether this change is not a mere escape from one evil to a greater is a question which only the future can settle, and the uncertainty which overhangs it is a striking example of the way in which the possibilities of evil lurk in our well-meant efforts to patch up the flaws of the inherited order of things. We may have been quite wrong in taking more and more of a parent's traditional duties off

his shoulders. Perhaps we should have been content with the slower process of educating the parents, or the still slower one of eugenic advance towards a society in which the adults could be trusted to look after their young even better than any State organization. Doubts of this kind force themselves upon even the most sanguine reformer, because the men who frame and enforce these changes are themselves liable to the congenital faults of the society they set out to improve. As Professor Carveth Read remarks: "Our restless race will try all social experiments. Wanting rational power to predict, we shall try whatever flatters our hopes. We shall try again and again, like an animal shaking the bars of its cage; for not even experience can immediately create understanding."

The impulse towards social betterment is generally supposed to arise from pure motives, but it is often no better than a form of tyranny. People who organize a "movement" for this and that compulsory change in our social habits are really pursuing a collective form of despotism. They are anxious that *their* view of things should dominate the lives of others; that every child should receive a particular form of religious instruction, that nobody should be allowed to drink alcoholic liquor, that nobody should work more than so many hours a day, that certain amusements should not be permitted on Sunday—and a whole host of other compulsions and prohibitions.

In private life, also, this primitive bent for

domination survives in the lust of interference. This is so prevalent an evil in our daily life that it is worth a little careful analysis. Why should so many good people be concerned to poke their noses into other people's affairs? Why should the average man—or woman—feel so irresistible a temptation to put a neighbour's house in order?

Under modern conditions this perpetual interference with others is a nuisance. It is one of the causes of the depopulation of villages, and of the love —not wholly wise—of large cities. In a village the intimate affairs of every household are known, more or less accurately, to everybody around; in a city no one bothers about his neighbours so long as they do not bother him. The village, as a matter of fact, is a survival of the primitive community; and the primitive community, it is important to note, depended for its existence upon the observance of custom. No savage chief, however strong and however well backed by the medicine-man, could control the daily lives of all his subjects by virtue of his own authority. Such "action at a distance" is impossible. But, with every household busily concerned in seeing that its neighbours should do the correct thing, open breaches of the law of the tribe were liable to be visited with the same sort of summary punishment as in the herd under natural selection. The instinct of submission to authority was thus backed by the curiosity of human beings about other people's behaviour and the delight which primitive natures find in catching others in the wrong. Early communities no doubt held their

chiefs in awe, but they must have had a more active fear of the peeping eye.

From these necessities of corporate life there grew hypocrisy and moral cowardice—two of the most unpleasant vices. Hypocrisy has been defined as the tribute that vice pays to virtue, but it is more often the sacrifice that human nature makes to the peeping eye. To-day, as in ancient times, outward conformity with social custom is the only way of securing peace; and under such conditions a man is less concerned about breaking a custom than about the breach being found out. Custom thus becomes a tyranny which is very difficult to alter even when a change is demonstrably good. In a thousand every-day matters which have nothing to do with morality—such as dress, diet, social observances—we allow our freedom of action to be limited by the tyranny of opinion. We are afraid to express our personalities, to do and say as we think best, because of the prejudices of neighbours who inherit the lust of interference and of sitting in judgment upon their fellow-men.

Civilized life, in fact, still bears the marks of the chains forged in savage and barbaric communities. These marks are, however, slowly wearing away. In cities, where the points of contact between individuals and between social grades are lighter and more numerous than in villages and small towns, the narrow-minded busybody is blissfully sterilized. And even in the more primitive societies the development of transport, the growth of education, and the influence of books, newspapers, and

other means of inspiration from a wider world are bringing about a humaner atmosphere. In this atmosphere public opinion concerns itself more with true values of right and wrong and less with formalities; men and women who seek to influence their fellows do so rather by the spread of knowledge and rational thought than by interference and inquisition.

It will be a long time, nevertheless, before the petty tyranny which gave unity to the earliest organized groups of human beings becomes extinct. It will be longer still before all of us rise superior to the slavery of custom and the ancient pleasure of dominating the lives of others.

Chapter VII

RELIGION

Whether religion has been, on the whole, a blessing or a curse to mankind is one of those controversies which have no ending. In the first place, an intimate knowledge of history from the days of Babylon is needed before a verdict can be drawn; and in the second place a strict definition of the word "religion" must be agreed upon. Both conditions are rare. What little most of us retain of historical knowledge is drawn from books written by people who assumed that one form of religion was the highest good of humanity. As for definitions of religion, they are legion. Religion is anything from a vague sense of awe, or an ethical aspiration, to a complicated body of belief and ritual.

A rough-and-ready way to answer the question would be to sum up the considered opinion of each group of believers about the other groups. As each group considers the others to be heretics and their beliefs to be baneful, we have here enough stones to kill the reputation of religion in general. But the *odium theologicum* is a poor foundation for a rational decision, and we must admit that the various religions and sects, while liberally cursing each other, unite in holding that some religion is

better than none. In Great Britain, for example, where the High Churchmen and the Low Churchmen exchange contempt more frequently than pulpits, where the Roman Catholics regard all other Christians as damned, and where Nonconformists have no more dreadful term of opprobrium than "Papist," all the schismatic bodies become members of one church in face of unbelief. It is much better for a man to declare himself a Buddhist or a Zoroastrian than to admit that he has no religious faith. Therefore the mutual hates of the two-and-seventy jarring sects must not be taken as implying that religion is an evil.

Here we shall not discuss the question in that general and almost abstract form. We shall consider merely how evil and religion have been related.

The partnership of the chief and the medicine-man in primitive communities was not casual. Sometimes a single man played both parts, presiding at the altar one day and leading into battle the next. When there was division of labour between chieftain and priest a close alliance between the two was a guarantee of tribal obedience. Remembering the value of general submission to authority in a tribe which depended for its very existence on united action under leadership, it is easy to understand that the early struggles between tribes would favour those in which—other things being equal—the temporal and spiritual powers were most closely combined. The tyranny of a chief is, after all, limited to the body; the tyranny of the priest

extends to a man's thoughts and feelings. One deals with the seen and the other with the unseen, which is often much more terrifying. A warrior who has no fear of a host of armed enemies is stricken with dread if he imagines that he has offended a single ghost.

It was largely to this faculty of fear that the priest appealed. The faculty itself was of value to a human tribe just as to an animal species. Animals are gregarious for defensive purposes; fear is the cement that binds them together. We see the same machinery at work even in civilized nations, where countless rifts and antagonisms display themselves until the danger of war solidifies and silences. The firmest alliances between nations are likewise those which have been born from a menace offered by another nation. If human beings had not inherited this sense of fear from their animal ancestors, they would never have been able to organize themselves. Yet fear is universally regarded as an evil, as one of the inexhaustible wells of human suffering. There could be no better example of how the ills that afflict humanity have grown out of its necessities.

In respect of fear, indeed, the animal is more fortunate than the man. The animal fears only the visible danger, while man, with his imagination, his intelligence, his power of remembering and of looking forward, multiplies the occasions of fear. A danger anticipated is, in fact, generally more agonizing than a danger present; the human mind, wrought out of primeval terrors, conceives a million

disasters that are never born. To the savage the enemy supposed to be lurking in the dark forest is worse than the foe who advances in the broad daylight. To the civilized man the visions that haunt the future often require more courage than the threat of immediate events.

Thus arose the fear of the unknown—the most paralysing form of fear, the most efficient instrument of priestly domination. Religion, so far as our knowledge of its origin goes, began in animism. The savage peopled his world with the ghosts of the dead and the living; to him the difference between sleep and death was that in sleep the spirit returned to the body, while in death it haunted its old home. Everything that moved or forced itself on his attention was, by a simple association of ideas, regarded as the home of a spirit; and the conditions of his existence made him look upon most of these spirits as malignant, the agents of sickness, death, storm, flood, and disaster. Being invisible, and being capricious in their behaviour, these spirits held him in a holy terror which nothing material could inspire.

It was the business of the medicine-man, the magician, the priest, to control the spirits. The modern believer who pays a priest to intercede for a departed soul at the throne of God follows the ancient believer who brought gifts to the medicine-man in order that he might, by incantation, chase away an evil spirit. The foundation of the process is fear, from which grows faith in the power of the priest to cast out fear. Under such conditions it

was inevitable that a priest who had established his claim to power in the spirit world would enjoy great authority in the every-day world. Fear may not have been the sole seed from which religion sprang, but it was certainly the fulcrum upon which the lever of organized religion rested.

Another element was, however, necessary to the full despotism of the priest. Fear of spirits created the desire to believe in the ability of certain men to subdue the spirits; credulity translated the desire into actual belief.

Credulity—the readiness to believe anything which is asserted as a fact merely because it is asserted—was in the early stages of our race a virtue. Had primitive man been naturally sceptical, the social unity brought about by submission to the authority of chieftain or priest would have been in constant danger of disruption. The man who stopped to ask questions would be like the herd-animal who did not respond to the signal of the leader—he would have been isolated and extinguished. "Their's not to reason why, their's but to do or die," was the law of the tribe in an unfriendly world as well as of the army in actual war. Conquest would go naturally to the race which yielded mental as well as physical submission to authority. And even to-day, when we consider ourselves well ahead in the pursuit of freedom, there are some people who argue that the nation likely to fare best in the world-struggle is the one most ready to believe and to obey.

To say that credulity was once useful as a

survival-factor is not, however, fully to explain how man came to be credulous. We do not now describe credulity as a virtue. Except in the sublime form of religious faith, we look upon it as a weakness. Man, we say, is a being endowed with reason, with judgment, with insight into cause and effect; it is his special function to examine, to test, to reflect before he gives his verdict. How, then, did he come by this phase of original sin?

The explanation lies, as before, in our animal origin. Animals accept the message of their senses implicitly, if not automatically; we take advantage of this fact in decoying and catching them. In primitive man the power of looking behind appearances to discover the reality was in its feeblest beginnings, and the impressions conveyed by speech were accepted as naturally and as indiscriminately as those conveyed by sight and touch. Speech, in short, was merely a new channel of communication with a mental machine accustomed to respond to every stimulus. Instinct and emotion were much more powerful elements in this machine than reason, and therefore any message which chimed with desire or feeling was welcomed without reserve. Even if there was no suggestion from outside, desire and feeling often created belief, so that where deep-rooted fears or hopes were concerned the human mind was an instrument on which a dogmatic hand could play any tune it pleased.

After many centuries of progress the brain of civilized man has become less plastic to suggestion. But it has by no means rid itself of the primitive

habit of credulity. Any one with authority or assurance has only to make an assertion with sufficient boldness of conviction and he will find hosts of believers if his assertion ministers to a deep-rooted fear or a strong desire. Towards the end of 1919 an American professor declared that the juxtaposition of two planets in the line between the earth and the sun would cause disastrous events on our planet. Immediately the fear of the end of world—that fear which we owe, among other childhood terrors, to Christian theology—awoke in the breasts of hundreds of thousands of "educated" people. Newspapers found it necessary to publish reassuring accounts of the solar system and to poke fun at the Professor, but they did not quite remove the uneasiness with which the appointed day was awaited.

Another and much more conspicuous example of credulity was the belief, during a critical phase in the War, that an army of a quarter of a million Russians was passing through Great Britain on the way to France. Many circumstances tended to foster this belief. Men were plentiful in Russia and tragically scarce in France. The seas were open, and our ships were passing freely between Scotland and Archangel. It was quite in our interest that the Germans should fear the possibility of Russian reinforcements. Every one remembers how the rumours started, how they spread, how they were confirmed from this and that part of the country by people of unimpeachable character and with access to sources of official or semi-official informa-

tion. An immense body of evidence grew up, until even the most robust scoffers began to bend under the weight. Finally the glad news was confirmed by a newspaper report from Rome, which the Censor allowed to be published.

These two examples of credulity on the large scale have been chosen because they are fresh in the public memory and relate to purely natural affairs about which we now know the truth. The end of the world did not take place in December, 1919, and two hundred and fifty thousand Russian soldiers did not pass through our midst in trains with drawn blinds. But what would have happened if there had been no means of testing the truth of the Great Russian Army myth? Many people are still looking forward to "the end of the world," although the elementary facts of astronomy show the absurdity of their expectation. Many people believe that there is "something in" the myth of the Angels at Mons, although the origin of the myth in a magazine story has been explained by the author himself. It is fair to assume, therefore, that if we had never positively learned that Russian soldiers had not been transported to France through Great Britain, the phantom army would still find its faithful believers, who would declare their faith to be founded on immeasurably broader proof than any religion.

This is not an idle speculation. It bears directly on one of the most lamentable results of credulity in religion. The impossibility of disproving a religious myth by the overwhelming kind of evidence avail-

able in the Russian case makes it immortal. Christian doctrine, for example, has undergone many changes since it first took shape, but the parts which have altered least are those which deal with transcendental matters that cannot be put to a positive test. The notion that the world was created in six days has been given up, because it conflicts with an invincible body of fact; but belief in the Trinity and in the doctrines which flow from that conception is still required of the Christian. And it is precisely on these ethereal points of dogma that the Christian is most certain. Taking a book, a Church, a clergyman, or an ancient tradition as his authority, he is ready to declare that the man who does not believe as he believes is a lost soul. He keeps an open mind, perhaps, on secondary matters like the New Testament miracles and the precise form and duration of torture in hell; but on the "essentials" of his faith—the most remote, the most occult conceptions—he has complete conviction.

It may seem paradoxical that men should have the most sublime assurance about the things that are most improbable, the most foreign to all human experience. But when one remembers the primitive love of the marvellous and the primitive readiness to accept every statement made with authority, it is easy to see how faith in the supernatural takes command over the mind. If the point at issue is one which cannot be tested, there is no check on credulity—except an attitude of scepticism towards all unproved assertions. Such an attitude was rare in the past, and it is none too common in the

present. With all our progress in science, with all our educational development, most people continue to imagine that some virtue resides in *believing*.

If this tendency to accept the unprovable on faith had led everybody to the same conclusion, little more than an intellectual form of evil would have resulted. With a criterion of this irrational kind, however, it was inevitable that faiths should become as varied as human nature and circumstances themselves. Holding beliefs which they imagined to be divine, men considered it their duty to make others believe as they believed. There are, happily for humanity, some religions which do not proselytize. They exist, like Freemasonry, to be accepted by anybody who chooses to be initiated. But these cases belong mainly to the East, where quietism prevails. In the West, where aggressiveness, love of domination, and the lust of interference are active, each group of believers has set out to convert the others. From this situation arose religious wars, violent and bloody controversies, frequent massacres, and endless persecutions.

Looking back over history, and contemplating the dreadful procession of horrors associated with his creed, the Christian consoles himself with the thought that these iniquities were due not to Christianity, but to the fallen state of the human race. To some extent he is right. The roots of these evils of religion lie deeper than any body of doctrine. They lie in the tendency of the savage to attach more importance to the charm that dangles on his neck than to the weapon in his hand. They lie

in the savage fear of the unseen, love of the marvellous, beast-like submission to authority. All these inherited failings led to the fatal adoption of error as the highest form of truth, of ignorance as the highest form of knowledge, of faith as the highest form of belief. Although the study of evolution shows us how slow the conquest of reason over deep-planted instincts was bound to be, there is something startling and tragic in the absurdity of the issues upon which men slew and persecuted each other incessantly. The early centuries of Christianity were marked by a series of violent disputes over points on which not one of the disputants had any more or any less knowledge than the others. Whether God the Father was older than God the Son became a problem which filled Christendom with passion for generations, until the famous Council at Nicea decided that the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church should anathematize those who said that there was a time when the Son of God was not. The date on which Easter should be celebrated; the question whether Christ had two wills; the mystery of the Incarnation—on such matters as these the early Christians persecuted and slew.

Throughout the Dark Ages heresy was the capital crime; and to those who believed with Augustine that persecution was a form of compassion for the guilty there was no limit to the means which might justly be used to suppress it. During the Middle Ages the growing power and organization of the Church enabled these principles to be carried out

in a systematic manner. The glamour which still hangs around the Crusades is a reflection of the pious fervour with which the Christians undertook these cruel and destructive campaigns. Moslems were not the only heretics who were the object of crusades. In the twelfth century the Pope instigated a war against the heretical Albigenses—a war unmatched, according to Milman, for rapacity, implacable hatred, and pitiless cruelty. In the fifteenth century the Spanish Inquisition was founded—not the first of its kind, but the most efficient in its work of oppression. The sixteenth century brought the Reformation—and the Thirty Years' War. Credulous belief in the Bible succeeded credulous belief in the Church, and brought its own form of tyranny over the human mind. Between the persecution of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants there is little to choose, except that the Catholics had more power and more opportunities. One of the darkest pages in Protestant history is the campaign against witchcraft—a typical example of the results of surrendering reason and will to the voice of authority.

To these mass evils, wrought by the Church as an organization, must be added the deplorable effect of certain Christian doctrines on the individual. For centuries the Church sounded its call to salvation on the keynote of fear. Life to the majority of folk in past centuries must have had ample occasions of terror. Murder, robbery, oppression, war, massacre, plague, and famine represented a generous instalment of God's judgment upon his

creatures. Upon these and all other human ills the Christian Church heaped the eternal horrors of hell. To us of a happier age the whole apparatus of hell is grotesque; but to the uneducated millions of the days of faith it was, when believed in at all, a ghastly reality. Let us grant that divine visions entranced a number of saints, and that many pious souls were comforted in their earthly trials by the hope of heaven; but what were these in comparison with the multitudes haunted from childhood by the Day of Judgment and the Everlasting Fire? The fact that such a savage doctrine formed part of the Christian revelation proves not only the debased origin of that revelation; it illustrates the corruption of the human mind by faith, and it explains, in part at least, the pitiless cruelty of religious persecution and religious war.

These are only a few of the more salient fruits of the dogmatic spirit in religion. The full story must be gathered from many books, in which also the results of pious credulity on the progress of knowledge and enlightenment may be studied. All that need be added here is a brief reference to the effects which still survive. Religious persecution is not dead. Its weapons have been taken from it; its talons have been cut and its teeth drawn; but it remains active in its discipline of the unbeliever. The man or woman who openly avows heresy runs a continual risk of his business and social relations being impaired. In small communities especially the pious have remarkable powers of ostracism, and wield them mercilessly on the known unbeliever.

The vast army of "silent Rationalists" is a tribute to the subtle pervasive influence of the spirit of intolerance. So much is to be gained by outward conformity—prestige, respectability, admission to select circles, privileges for the children, and so on —that comparatively few people think it necessary or worth while to declare themselves rebels. They acquiesce in the general hypocrisy, knowing that most of their neighbours have no living religious faith worth the name, but knowing also that these amorphous semi-unbelievers are almost as keen as the Church itself in submitting to the conventions laid down by the successors to the persecutors of old.

It is the fashion, of course, for Christians to assume that the evil of intolerance is a thing of the past. To-day, they assert, a man may believe what he pleases, and no one will say him nay. But this measure of freedom of thought is mainly theoretical. The Churches still insist that every child in State schools shall receive a religious education, the only possibility of escape being at a price which few families care to pay. They support every law which tends to restrict the freedom of the people to behave on Sundays as they do on week-days. They oppose every movement for reforming the marriage laws on humaner lines than those laid down in the Bible or in ecclesiastical tradition. Many of their charities and welfare organizations are maintained exclusively for the benefit of the baptized. When the iniquity of compulsory church parades became so glaring as a result of the enormous increase in the Army

during the War, the Churches merely debated whether the practice was judicious.

The catalogue can be made more formidable by going back a few years. It was only yesterday that the right to bequeath money to a Freethought organization was recognized by the law. It was only the day before yesterday that people of "no religious faith" were permitted to affirm instead of taking the oath. The time when it was illegal to publish heretical books is not unknown to living memory. And those of the elder generation have vivid recollections of the heresy hunts which supplied the most exciting form of theological sport in the nineteenth century. This form of sport is almost unknown to-day, because Higher Criticism and the advance of Science have so disintegrated belief in the letter of the old creeds that no man has the heart to call the hounds together. To the same cause we may trace the decay in authority which makes the Churches powerless to assert claims once unquestioned. Their attitude as regards education and church parades will show, however, that where circumstances give them the power they use it with the same intolerance and the same lack of scruple as their fathers in the days of open persecution.

The main legacy of intolerance lies in the bitter social divisions which the Churches serve to perpetuate. Reference has already been made to the relations which exist between the High Church, the Low Church, the Nonconformist sects, and the Roman Catholics. The tragi-comic feud which broke out some years ago between the "Wee

Frees" and the "Big Frees" in Scotland was another example of a notorious failing. Nowadays the Churches are flirting with the notion of re-union, less because they feel passionately drawn to each other in Christian fellowship than because their divisions are a scandal and a source of weakness. They feel that if they were united they would be able once more to assert their authority over the mind and conscience of man.

The evils of intolerance and sectarian division flow directly from faith in the supernatural. It is not a mere coincidence that they were most active when faith was most robust. A man who "believes" is convinced that he has received the law of life direct from heaven; and it becomes his first duty to make others obey the same law. When the essence of his belief is that the soul is everything and the body nothing, that this world is a mere ante-room to heaven or hell (as the case may be), and that an act of faith is a guarantee of eternal bliss, the duty of making a man die that he may live again becomes obvious. It is surely undeniable that the Christians waged religious wars and massacred and persecuted unbelievers (and each other) with the highest intentions. Their offence lay in their intentions when allied with the ancient weaknesses—once beneficent qualities—of submission to authority on the one hand, and love of domination on the other.

The case of religion is particularly interesting because of the combination of the loftiest and most degraded in human nature. Thanks to tendencies inherited from savage forbears, saints and prelates

turned from the contemplation of the infinite and eternal to the destruction of life and happiness. The transition was as easy as the transformation of a sword into a cross by holding it at the point instead of the hilt. Good becomes evil, and evil good, according to the manner in which each is used.

The problem for religion in the future is to root out the cause of its evil results. Our analysis of the origin of religious evil brings us to the very thing which was once supposed to be its greatness—the act of faith. To believe in something incapable of proof—proof in the ordinary human sense—is the essence of supernatural religion and the seed of bigotry. Dogma meeting dogma can do nothing but try to kill. The believer in a dogma—the man who feels that it represents a higher truth than could be drawn from earthly knowledge—takes the same pride in its possession as the savage does in owning a potent charm. It becomes a fixed idea; and a fixed idea always tends to exclude every thought or emotion that does not chime with it.

Thus the mind controlled by faith shuts out the ideal of liberty, the feeling of compassion, even the love of parent, child, or mate. No such factors must be allowed to disturb the serenity of faith; and, above all, no word of denial, doubt, or inquiry shall be allowed to step into the holy of holies. When the state of mind of the ardent believer is analysed it will be found that the clinging to a fixed idea is always made intense by the shadowy fear of doubt. The little devil of doubt was always

teasing holy men in their meditations; they fasted and scourged themselves and prayed unceasingly to cast him out. In such a mental condition any hint that the faith so jealously guarded was folly roused the same sort of anger as the savage might feel towards any one who threatened to steal his fetish. To this resentment against the disturber of the faith add the egotism and the love of domination inherent in humanity, and you have all the main ingredients of a Holy War.

The case is quite different when a man holds a faith on evidence which any other man may verify. He knows that his belief has no other validity than that given to it by the evidence, and by logical reasoning from that evidence. This being so, the notion of spreading his belief by force, by threats, by offers of rewards after the manner of religions, never occurs to him. Science, in a word, does not persecute.

It must be admitted, however, that men of science are not always free from bigotry. They do at times allow the principles which they have adopted as a result of study to become fixed ideas. We see this operating in the warfare of scientific opinion roused by the publication of the *Origin of Species*. We see it also in the opposition of the general body of medical men to Lister's antiseptic work, to the use of hypnotism, and to other radical innovations. In some degree this resistance to change is due to mental inertia and to the virtue of scepticism in a world of quackery; but where it takes the form of ostracism—as it did in the case of hypnotism—

it arises from the ancestral tendency of the human mind to be dominated by a fixed idea. In proportion as a scientific theory or "law" is adopted for its own sake, and not for the evidence in which it is rooted, so will the mind be closed to the influence of facts and arguments which traverse the theory or the law.

To say, however, that men of science are apt to be too conservative and even bigoted is no more than to say that they are born of man. The point to be observed is that, while supernatural religion imposes fixed ideas at the outset and offers them as permanent divine truth, science imposes no dogmas and represents truth as being a progressive discovery. Roman Catholics and the High Church Anglicans (an exclusive minority quaintly called by themselves "Catholics") are the most thoroughgoing religious sects; they are the only ones that really seem to know where they are; and they make a point of sticking to tradition. They represent the fixed idea elevated to a system of salvation, with creeds and ceremonies all cut and dried. One has only to contrast them with any school of scientific thought to gain a very lively sense of contrast. Within the last century scientific ideas have evolved with almost bewildering rapidity. In spite of the tendency of the human mind to make a fetish of its beliefs, the outlook of science has radically altered, and continues to alter as new facts accumulate and are sifted and arranged. It is literally true that most books on science are out of date before they are printed.

Religion, on the other hand, is not without its progressive movements. Apart from the impregnable rocks we have just mentioned, there are many sects which are very far from being the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Their creeds have become plastic and their divine phrases have become elastic. Although there is a great deal of looseness and inconsistency of thought in this "liberal" movement, it does indicate that religion is trying to cast out the evil that is in it. The more religion apologizes for itself, the more it tries to adjust itself to the observed facts of life, the more it appeals to experience and reason, the further it draws away from the danger of renewing its ancient iniquities. In all these efforts to walk freely as a body of credible doctrine, organized religion is tied by the leg to cast-iron creeds. It does its best to re-interpret these creeds as it re-interprets the trust deeds upon which it retains the endowments of the faithful, but they retard its progress to the purely rational stage—the stage in which it will share with science the saving virtue of pursuing truth at all costs, even the cost of discarding truth once held sacred.

In days gone by the religious pursuit of truth was not, however, quite unknown. It was a pursuit with rack and thumbscrew, sword and flame. The long struggle of science against the tyranny of theology is a thrice-told tale, and there is no need to re-tell it in order to prove that supernatural religion has been both an active and a passive obstacle to the advance of knowledge. So much is

admitted even in histories written by the orthodox. The usual excuse for the undeniable fact is, on the other hand, not quite so frank as the admission of guilt. It is suggested that clerical opposition to science was merely an incident, a kind of by-product of faith, in days when people laid too much stress on certain dogmas or ideas which were not essential to the Christian faith. In other words, religion is acquitted while its exponents are reprimanded. Nevertheless, the exponents may plead that their action was quite logical. Believing that they possessed a higher than earthly truth, a truth without variableness or shadow of turning, their plain duty was to crush everything in the human sciences of astronomy, biology, geology, or any other 'ology that contradicted the divine science.

The suppression of science was in fact an evil inherent in religion, like the tendency to personal persecution, with which it is closely akin. Even to-day, when religion pretends to be reasonable if not wholly rational in the strict sense, and when violent efforts have been made to square religion and science, the conspiracy against knowledge is continued. Under clerical influence our school children are taught things about the Bible that no educated adult is expected to believe, and it is only by stealth that a teacher can talk about certain phases of evolution which do not tally with the Law and the Prophets. A similar kind of pious fraud is played on the innocent savage, who is offered a form of Christianity discarded by nearly every Christian denomination except the Salvation Army.

While religion has attempted to keep the human mind from working in certain directions, it has had an evil influence in keeping it busy on problems which have no earthly value. The fact that people slew and persecuted each other because they could not agree about God the Father being coeval with God the Son, or about the consecrated wafer and wine being the actual flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, is tragic enough, but hardly less so than the absorption of men's minds on such problems when the world was sunk in misery and ignorance. Lord Rosebery once referred to the "catacombs of dead books" in our libraries; but among these literary corpses none, surely, can be more completely and eternally dead than the theological works that were poured out generation after generation. Most of them are unreadable to-day, not so much because of their manifest errors as on account of their utter uselessness. So far as they were theological they did not add one grain to the sum of human knowledge. Their writers had no interest in that direction. Heaven was their goal; and for centuries the subtlest minds wasted their energies in arguing about the imaginary paths that led to this visionary end. To-day they have their successors in the clergy who disdainfully murmur "drains!" when the Church is recommended to devote its attention to the welfare of the people.

To this obsession with the other world—the characteristic obsession of religion—we may trace the hostility as well as the indifference of the Church to the improvement of the human lot. Among the

fallacies of history as it is usually written none is more glaring than the claim that the Christian Church has been uniformly on the side of the poor and the oppressed. In addition to its own record of persecution, the Church has to answer for its toleration of slavery, its opposition to every phase of the movement towards industrial reform which began over a hundred years ago. The oft-forgotten facts of the case are admirably summarized in Joseph McCabe's *The Church and the People*. Our present concern is to trace the reason why men professing the loftiest spiritual ideals were so deaf to the cry of pain and discontent. The reason lay in their exclusive devotion to these very ideals. Allied with the State in upholding authority based on the divine government of the world, the Church regarded every reform as a denial of its principles and a threat against its power. The evil which it did was the logical outcome of its other-worldism, its sublime trust in theological tradition, its belief that nothing mattered so much to humanity as faith in a series of religious dogmas and submission to the ostensible will of God.

A final word may be said on the relation of religion to conduct. It is still the fashion to regard religion as the fountain of morals and the guardian of the sacred principles of ethics. But here again the facts are unfriendly. All the moral teaching which we associate with Christianity was known in pre-Christian days, and the history of the Church notoriously proves that it did not put the best of this teaching into action. Moreover, the ages of

faith were the ages of moral degradation; and to-day, after generations in which the authority of the Church has been declining, the people as a whole observe a higher standard of conduct than at any earlier stage in history.

The decline of religious belief and the rise in moral strength represent cause and effect, not a mere coincidence. So long as moral precepts were enforced from above, according to a fixed supernatural code, buttressed by punishments and rewards in a future life, they could make no effective appeal to the mind and heart of man. Further, religion has always laid more stress on belief than on behaviour; the sinner who seeks the priest on his death-bed has always been more valuable to the Church than the man who lives a good life and dies without conviction of sin. In this fact we see how the moral judgment is warped by obsession with standards supposed to be laid down centuries ago by divine authority. Progress in morality really begins at the same point as progress in thought—the point at which the human and the rational are accepted in place of the superhuman and the irrational. This is the point, we may repeat, at which the evil inherent in religion begins to decline.

VIII

SEX

In saying that ecclesiastics were obsessed by the other world we did many of them a slight injustice. The obsession has not always been complete. For example, the enormous material wealth acquired by the Church is as inconsistent with the spirit of other-worldliness as it is with the letter of the injunctions given to the apostles. But, apart from that sordid instance, we have evidence of a strong counter-obsession which was certainly of this world, though it was sometimes declared to take its rise in hell. Christian theology, with its central mystery of the Incarnation, bears witness to it. Clerical celibacy, which offers a painful escape from the obsession of sex, is an indirect tribute to its power. And the confessions of saints have many eloquent hints of this disturbing factor. The earnest monk of old, we gather, frequently had the sacred page hidden from him by soft hands pressed over his eyes, while angelic whispers filled the playful darkness with bright and seductive images. Beside him, while he prayed, knelt visions of beauty, holding him to earth in an ecstasy that no dream of heaven could surpass.

Those things were of the devil. So much was this the case, indeed, that it was only in a formal

sense that the Christian monk accepted the picture of Satan as a horned being with a cloven hoof—a kind of blackened and gloomy replica of Pan. The one touch of truth in the picture was that Pan had been the sensual god who presided over the fertility of flocks and spent his time with music and dancing. Every monk knew that when Satan desired to be peculiarly efficient in evil he assumed the guise of a beautiful woman. Any cynic who wants to indulge his contempt for the sex cannot do better than begin at the apostle Paul and proceed through the Fathers and other authorities of the Christian Church. Tertullian called woman "the devil's gateway," and St. Augustine regarded concupiscence as an unmitigated evil. These verdicts are typical of the views of a Church which could never forgive woman for Eve's behaviour in the Garden of Eden.

Such views are far from extinct at the present day. The evils associated with the sex element in human life are so deep and manifold that by an easy tradition the element itself is treated as essentially evil. Even when this extreme is not reached, sex is usually regarded as the dominant form of evil. In England, at least, when we speak of an immoral man we generally mean that he is immoral in his sexual relations. Other forms of immorality are secondary. On the other hand, we discover in manifestations of sex the supreme happiness of which human beings are capable. Love supplies the highest symbolism for the expression of religious faith. Our arts are permeated with it. Poetry

and other imaginative literature, music, painting, dancing: these take their inspiration largely from the shining source which casts so black a shadow over the passions and follies of mankind. Romance is occasionally non-sexual, becoming merely an adventurous play of the individual in a world of chance; but for the vast majority of us romance apart from sex has no colour, no warmth, no life.

This paradox is full of significance. It embodies, in the most startling form, the apparent paradox of evil. One and the same impulse leads men to the most degraded actions and exalts their emotions and their thoughts to the level at which the human passes into the divine. The violence of the contrast is due to the elemental power of the impulse and its close connection with every function of mind and heart. It will be interesting, therefore, to observe how this imperative force became established, and how, in the evolution of humanity, it grew from a beneficent necessity into the source of a multitude of evils.

To understand the origin of sex we must go back to the simplest of living things. At that stage there is no sign of the duality of male and female. The organism reproduces by dividing into two parts, each of which appears an exact replica of the original organism. A variation in this type of reproduction takes place in certain organisms which produce, from a part of themselves, "buds" which become separate organisms identical with their parent. The first hint of sex in reproduction occurs in the process

of conjugation, in which two separate organisms coalesce, forming a new individual, which proceeds to reproduce by simple division. This mingling of individuals seems to stimulate the energy of the organism, giving it, as it were, a new lease of life.

A closer approach to sexual reproduction is illustrated by the primitive organisms which consist of balls of cells. In a previous chapter we showed how division of labour begins to operate in such organisms. The same principle applies to reproduction as to digestion and movement. Some many-celled animals reproduce by the splitting up of certain cells into clusters, which escape from the parent and start life independently. In other cases some cells become large and others small; and reproduction takes place by a small cell entering a large cell and fertilizing it. Both these types of reproductive cell—the small one corresponding to the spermatozoon of the male and the large one to the ovum of the female—may be found in one colony of cells. Or one colony may develop only large (female) cells, and another only small (male) cells. All these variations, which indicate the dawn of sexual reproduction, are found in Volvox, a lowly organism which is a colony of one-celled animals.

As we rise higher in the scale of evolution the process of reproduction tends to become definitely sexual. There are some highly developed organisms which carry both male and female cells. Flowers are the most familiar examples; and sponges, worms, and snails are cases of hermaphrodites among

animals. But the drift is definitely towards distinct male and female animals—the male carrying the spermatozoon and the female the ovum.

Reproduction, then, requires interaction between two individuals. It must be noted, moreover, that the male differs from the female in much more than the possession of a different kind of reproductive cell. The whole organism tends to take its key-note, as it were, from the character of that cell. In the Volvox the male cell is active and the female passive. In definitely sexual organisms the male and female incline towards the same differences; the male is active, expending energy, while the female is relatively inactive and stores up energy—an essential matter for her part in reproduction. As Mr. Walter Heape, the embryologist, says: "The Male and Female individual may be compared in various ways with the spermatozoon and the ovum. The Male is active and roaming—he hunts for his partner and is an expender of energy; the Female is passive, sedentary, one who waits for her partner and is a conserver of energy."

These glimpses into the evolution of sex show that in reproduction we are dealing with something which is absolutely fundamental. Cell-division for reproduction is virtually identical with cell-division for growth, which is life itself. Further, among the higher animals the influence of sex permeates the whole organism. There is ample reason why this should be so. If Nature can be said to have an object at all, it lies in the perpetuation of species. Organisms which had reached the sexual stage

would have died out unless means were in operation for bringing the sexes together. Therefore we find that, through the nervous system, the organs of touch, sight, smell, and hearing co-operate in the union of the sexes. The more perfect the co-operation—the more, that is to say, the reciprocal impressions made by the male and female on sense organs tend to urge them to the sexual act—the greater the chance of survival.

When the capacity for emotion dawns, it plays its part in furthering the same essential end. Among men and women the range of impressions conveyed by the senses is wider than in the case of animals; many phases of beauty, many harmonies of feeling, unite to strengthen or direct the primitive impulse of sex. Even the power of thought, which brings into play the factor of intellectual interest, serves to heighten the mutual attractiveness of the sexes. It is, in fact, necessary that in the vast majority of men and women every faculty should be an ally of sex. Were it otherwise, the penalty would be the extinction of the race.

Here we discover the biological reason for the pervasiveness of sex. Its pervasiveness, however, might be innocent of evil if the impulse which thrills our emotional and mental life were not so powerful, and so ruthless in its power. This, again, was a biological necessity. The whole course of evolution tended in favour of those species in which the sexual imperative was strongest. Man is the only animal with a foreknowledge of the results of the sexual act, and he did not gain that foreknowledge until he

had traced out a chain of cause and effect. Before he was able to make that effort of reason he obeyed the sex impulse as blindly as any of the lower animals. There is, in fact, no such thing as a "reproductive instinct"; there is merely a sexual instinct, which brings the males and females of every species together in the same inevitable way as the male cells and the female cells in Volvox are united.

Nature has many examples of this instinct being stronger than life itself. The mating of spiders often ends in the female devouring the male—a fact which would probably have been woven into an allegory if the spider were a more romantic animal. Butterflies and many other insects die after they have performed the act of reproduction and deposited their eggs in a safe place. The most familiar case is that of the may-fly, which emerges from a long larval life in the water to a giddy love-dance for a few hours in the sunlight, after which both males and females die. "It is strangely true, even in the highest forms," as Professor J. Arthur Thomson writes, "that reproduction, though a blossoming of the whole life, is also the beginning of death." The phrase, "Who dies if England lives?," is a parody of Nature's own principle.

No argument is needed to prove that the same principle applies to man—even to civilized man. There is only too much evidence of the reckless, overwhelming energy of sex. And if any race were to arise in which the sex-impulse were feebler than selfishness, that race would go under as infallibly

as any animal species whose power of reproduction had failed.

We may, in passing, note how artfully the pervasiveness and the intensity of the sex-instinct combine to capture people who imagine that they are quite rational in their relations with the opposite sex. Primitive instinct makes the individual so sensitive to beauty of form, voice, and movement, and to the expression of certain emotions and thoughts, that another individual who touches these chords becomes the most wonderful and perfect thing in the world. Although the æsthetic, emotional, and mental elements may be the only ones distinctly realized, the ancient instinct underlies them all, and the combination serves to create the illusion that the being who awakens all these responses is intrinsically all that he or she appears to be in the eye of love. The independent observer does not share this illusion; in fact, he generally wonders how so plain and commonplace a being can attract anybody, much less become the object of rhapsody. The illusion, however, serves its purpose—the same purpose, ultimately, as the summer dance of the may-fly.

Assuming that life itself is good, it seems to follow that the act of creation, to which this deep and urgent impulse drives all living things, is wholly beneficent. In a state of nature this conclusion may be accepted; but mankind does not exist in that state, and, by reason of its departure from the simple life of instinct, is of two minds on the subject. In the realm of sex we have one of the

most striking examples of how civilized man has, by his interference with Nature, brought upon himself a series of dangers and disasters.

Among the more primitive races of man the union of the sexes takes place at puberty. It is far from being the promiscuous affair that many people suppose it to be, as it is closely regulated by tribal customs. These customs are often complex and obscure, but their persistence among people who have little power of control over their instincts proves that they sit very lightly upon "the child of nature." With the advance of civilization, however, there is a steady rise in the age at which individuals are considered to be marriageable. During historical times the rise has been very marked, and if we glance at the social world of Great Britain no more than a century ago we are struck with the fact that girls felt themselves degenerating into old maids at an age when the modern woman would be only beginning to think seriously of matrimony. With this change there has been no abatement of the demand for sexual innocence until the marriage day. For anything from ten to fifteen years, the boy who is growing to manhood and the girl who is growing to womanhood are called upon to exercise absolute control over an instinct of the most elemental and volcanic character.

Out of this disharmony comes a veritable mountain of suffering. The ethical standard is—as, from an ethical standpoint, it ought to be—in advance of the capacity of the majority of people to reach it; and

at the same time every failure to reach it is visited with the heaviest of social penalties. To those who hold that the sexual instinct is essentially base, to be tolerated only when sanctified by a religious ceremony, the weight of the penalties inflicted appears to be fully justified. But to those who realize the part which the sexual instinct has played in evolution, and who appreciate how its urgency is affected by heredity and by circumstances, the rigour of the conflict between instinct and control suggests a more compassionate treatment of those who fail. The rigidly righteous have still need to hearken to Burns's ardent words :—

> Think, when your castigated pulse
> Gies now and then a wallop,
> What raging must his veins convulse,
> That still eternal gallop :
> Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
> Right on ye scud your sea-way ;
> But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
> It maks an unco leeway.

There are welcome signs that the rigidly righteous view is giving place to a less harsh and uncompromising attitude, based on a close study of human nature and upon the influences which effect its rise and fall. But with this aspect of the matter we are not immediately concerned. Our purpose for the moment is to trace the evolution of evil from this once beneficent instinct.

It is the merest commonplace that the troubles of the sex life are not confined to the effort of keeping to the narrow path in the celibate life. Indeed, some cynics might assert that they do not

really begin until the day of marriage. However that may be, the evils associated with married life are certainly formidable. One might think that union with a chosen mate would, as it were, restore the ancient harmony between man and Nature. In many, many cases it does so, to a large extent; but we have only to note the buttresses placed round the institution of marriage, and the authorized doors of escape with which it has been provided, to realize that the adjustment is imperfect.

In this connection we can trace the same tendency as is so prominent elsewhere—the tendency for progress to bring evil in its train.

The life-long mating of birds is often held up as a model of virtue; mankind is called upon to imitate the constancy of pigeons. Only in a poetical sense, however, can the sexual habits of birds be given a moral quality. The conditions of bird-life involve co-operation between the male and female in building nests, hatching the eggs, and rearing the young until they are able to fly. This co-operation is so prolonged and so intimate that it builds up a habit which the animal organism finds much easier to maintain than to break. The dog, which certainly shows the dawning of a moral sense, is sexually promiscuous, because the conditions of its development favoured that course.

Applying the same principle to men, it is evident that the communities where the father and mother co-operated in the care of their young would have a better chance of survival than those in which the continuous double protection was not given. We

thus find a definite trend in human evolution towards monogamy. The trend is modified in the direction of polygamy where, owing to frequent wars, the females are largely in excess of the males; and again towards polyandry in the rarer cases where the males preponderate. Generally speaking, however, custom imposed monogamy on the majority of races as they became more highly organized. In this connection the important point to be noted is that the simpler the individual character and the social conditions the more readily are the instincts and desires satisfied in mating. Physical, emotional, and mental harmony between individuals is easily secured when the physical forces are strong and the emotional and mental factors are crude or feebly developed. The simplest needs are the most readily satisfied; and the marriage relations established at puberty need little more than the support of custom to keep them in effective action.

At no time, however, is the stability of any marriage system very secure, even when it lies close to nature. Behind all the changes and chances which disturb every human arrangement there is the fundamental difference between the female and the male—a difference which does something more than form the basis of mutual attraction. The characteristics of the female, as summed up in the sentences quoted from Mr. Heape, reveal her as a conservative factor in the marriage relation, as in most others. Contrasting with her passive tendencies are those of the "active and roaming male."

From the earliest days the man has been the hunter, the fighter, the traveller; and his habit of mind reflects the same restlessness and love of adventure. Again, the sexual act in the case of woman is the prelude to a long series of events which absorb her energies and afford exercise for emotions deep and strong enough to occupy her whole life. To man, on the other hand, the sexual act may be merely an incident which leaves no abiding trace. The trite quotation, "Love is to man a thing apart; 'Tis woman's whole existence," embodies a profound truth which reveals itself in the promiscuous or polygamous tendencies of the male and the less unstable habits of the female. Public opinion, which falls much more heavily on the incontinence and infidelity of woman than on those of man, endorses, more or less instinctively, the consequences of this innate difference in constitution. To-day, as in all the earlier stages of human development, it forms the most fruitful source of discord and disruption in the marriage relation.

The chances of full harmony from any mating, moreover, diminish with the growth of civilization. Individuals become more complex. Their physical needs no doubt remain, but are overlaid and transfused with æsthetic tastes and a thousand fastidious delicacies of which the primitive man knows nothing. Emotional life attains an intricacy and a range and a sensitiveness far beyond the simple passions of the savage. The mind becomes stored with experiences, ambitions, dogmas, prejudices, and reasoned convictions which make it a labyrinth

of conscious and unconscious forces. Social, religious, and other external elements also enter with increasing diversity into the problem, reacting upon the individual character, and raising barriers or digging gulfs between men and women. The net result of progress, therefore, is to complicate the human equation to such an extent that complete harmony between two individuals becomes virtually an impossibility.

An inference sometimes drawn from this state of affairs is that the sexes are fundamentally in antagonism, and that love or marriage is never more than an armed truce, behind which an elemental battle is being fought. French novelists are particularly fond of this theory, but a study of love from the evolutionary standpoint might suggest that the evil they discover is not elemental. It is rather the harmony, the mutual attraction, the reciprocity of feeling, which is elemental, while the antagonism has grown out of the revolt against nature which we call civilization. What generally happens in modern marriage is that the ancient instinct throws a veil over the multitude of differences of taste and feeling and thought which exist between the chooser and the chosen. This veil is part of the illusion of perfection to which we have already referred. When Nature's end has been achieved, the disharmonies begin to make themselves felt, one by one, day by day. Many of them are petty enough—mere pin-pricks on the body marital; others strike deeper into the secret and vital regions. Whether petty or great, they involve, as a necessary condition of most

happy marriages, a process of compromise in which concessions, adjustments, suppressions, and sacrifices follow each other in apparently endless sequence.

With every upward step in human progress this process becomes more difficult, because it involves more intricate and more delicate factors. The only compensating element is that progress brings with it an increasing faculty of forethought and control. We may observe, however, that the range of choice open to the average man or woman is limited,[1] and that the primal instinct is always apt to distort or overwhelm judgment. This same instinct is ever ready, after the almost irrevocable choice has been made, to destroy the relation which it has created. One of the penalties of the long period of celibacy before the ever-rising age of marriage is that the fulfilment of the sexual instinct heightens the attractiveness which one sex holds for the other. Faculties and emotions gather unusual strength from their previous suppression, and threaten, if they do not find full expression within the marriage bond, to seek adventures beyond it. However great the disillusion which one union has brought, the awakened instinct persists in seeking the most

[1] In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* Thomas Hardy touches in characteristic fashion upon this point: "In the ill-judged execution of the well-judged plan of things the call seldom produces the comer, the man to love rarely coincides with the hour for loving. Nature does not often say 'See!' to her poor creature at a time when seeing can lead to happy doing; or reply 'Here!' to a body's cry of 'Where?' till the hide-and-seek has become an irksome, outworn game. We may wonder whether at the acme and summit of the human progress these anachronisms will be corrected by a finer intuition, a closer interaction of the social machinery than that which now jolts us round and along; but such completeness is not to be prophesied, or even conceived as possible."

ample outlet; it creates new illusions to compensate for the death of the old. Bearing in mind the connection between the complexity of character and the chances of disappointment in the attempted union of two characters, we see how civilization tends to increase what may be called the native instability of the marriage-tie.

In course of time, perhaps, humanity will attain to a new harmony as well adapted to individual impulses and social needs as the instinctive sex-life of animals. But to-day, as in all the yesterdays of the race, practice lags behind principle. Among even the most advanced nations the despotism of chastity and monogamy is tempered by prostitution and illicit unions, more or less promiscuous. In spite of every form of restraint—social, moral, legal, and religious—the instinct to which we owe the renewal of the race breaks out and claims the sacrifice of happiness, honour, and life itself.

Many of the evils wrought by this impulse rooted in our blood are manifest; others belong to the underworld which, from pity and fear, we strive to hide from the general view. Incest, rape, criminal assault, some of the manifestations of homosexuality, a host of indecencies and abnormalities, bear awful witness to the strength of the primitive passion which mankind inherits. This instinct, which can be awakened even among infants in the cradle, which poisons the innocence of childhood and youth, which involves manhood and womanhood in endless civil war, and which time and again brings a brilliant intellect or a noble career to ruin—this

instinct is an anarchy too dreadful to be tolerated and too powerful to be destroyed. Among all the forms of evil it places the most lurid mark of interrogation against the facile optimism which holds this to be the best of all possible worlds, and sees in the mechanism of humanity convincing proof of an all-wise and beneficent Providence.

Little is to be gained, for the purposes of the present argument, by an analysis of the specific evils associated with sex—prostitution, incontinence, onanism, and so on. They are all phases of the same discord, produced by a legacy over which man has not gained anything like full control. The means by which a higher degree of control may be obtained will be discussed later, as part of the general question of the cure for evil. A word may, however, be said here on one aspect of the sex-life which is readily susceptible to control. It affords a good example of the manner in which reason and knowledge may effect an adjustment between primal instinct and the desire for human betterment.

The continued existence of any species depends upon its fertility and upon the care bestowed upon the offspring. Primitive organisms make up by extravagant propagation for the lack of protection for their young, and as we rise in the scale of being we find, as already noted, more conservative breeding and more prolonged and efficient rearing of the young. Similar progress is observed when we compare the lower with the higher races of man. The lower races show a high birth-rate, with a heavy mortality, especially among the young; while

the higher races tend towards smaller families and a more careful conservation of the individual.

Modern civilized life, however, makes such heavy demands upon health and energy that the begetting of children to the natural number and at the natural rate becomes a burden which the average woman cannot bear without detriment to the well-being of herself and her offspring. Further, with the continuous rise in the standard of living it becomes more and more difficult to maintain and educate the large families which result from unrestricted child-bearing. An immense amount of suffering has arisen from this lack of harmony between inherited tendencies and existing conditions. As Dr. Marie Stopes writes: "The reason.....is that it is not so very long ago that our bodies evolved from an animal ancestry, and the need of that primitive animal stock from which we sprang was an enormous number of frequently repeated offspring to make up for the appalling wastage which existed. These primitive functions and strictures are still in our systems."

Theoretically the attitude of the Churches is that human fertility ought to be left to the decisions of Providence. Marriage being ordained for the procreation of children, it is impious to interfere or to repine. Practically, moral restraint is recognized as permissible. This instrument is, however, beyond the power of the majority of people; and even if it were not, it is open to the objection that the suppression, partial or complete, of the physical side of marriage has far-reaching effects of a most undesir-

able kind. In this matter common sense has sought a solution without benefit of clergy. To an increasing extent parents are deliberately limiting the number of their offspring. They are acting on the principle so ably defined by Dr. Stopes: "That every life which is brought into this world should be considered from the point of view of the happiness of the pair who are bringing it forth, and the health and happiness and possible use of the child which is going to be added to the community, and of the needs of the community as a whole."

We may contrast this with the picture of the Durbeyfield family given by Thomas Hardy in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles:* "All these young souls were passengers in the Durbeyfield ship—entirely dependent on the judgment of the two Durbeyfield adults for their pleasures, their necessities, their health, even their existence. If the heads of the Durbeyfield household chose to sail into difficulty, disaster, starvation, disease, degradation, death, thither were these half-dozen little captives under hatches compelled to sail with them—six helpless creatures, who had never been asked if they wished for life on any terms, much less if they wished for it on such hard conditions as were involved in being of the shiftless house of Durbeyfield. Some people would like to know whence the poet whose philosophy is in these days deemed as profound and trustworthy as his song is breezy and pure, gets his authority for speaking of 'Nature's holy plan.'"

In this fundamental matter, therefore, man is becoming the master of his destiny. Although the

conditions are peculiar, inasmuch as the control is largely outside the primal instincts concerned and accords with the wishes as well as the reason of the individual, it may be accepted as a promise that the more difficult problems of control over the evils born of inherited tendencies will ultimately be solved.

IX

OTHER FORMS OF EVIL

When other forms of evil are studied on the same lines as those applied to tyranny, religion, and sex, the analysis leads to similar conclusions. The litany of evil, like the Litany of the Saints, involves the almost endless repetition of a single refrain. We need not, therefore, do more than glance at a few of the remaining items in the calendar.

The Psalmist's hasty phrase, "All men are liars," is treated flippantly nowadays, and is adorned with the comment that if he had lived in modern times he would have made the same remark at his leisure. Neither the impulsiveness of the statement nor the cheap irony of the amendment can, however, quite conceal the fact that the tendency to deceit is inherent in man. The bird which trails an (apparently) wounded wing or alights ostentatiously many yards away from its nest is proving the animal origin of a habit which the inspired schoolboy described as "an abomination unto the Lord and a very present help in time of trouble." Bacon may have gone a little too far in saying that the love of the lie is characteristic of man. People who tell lies for the love of lying are abnormal; the ordinary man lies with an ulterior purpose, and he inherits this tendency from ancestors to whom deceit was almost a necessity.

Among primitive races, much more even than among civilized nations, success in war was important to survival. And in war the art of deceit becomes sacred. Joseph Conrad has summed up the situation admirably in the following passage from *Nostromo* :—

> The popular lore of all nations testifies that duplicity and cunning, together with bodily strength, were looked upon, even more than courage, as heroic virtues by primitive mankind. To overcome your adversary was the great affair of life. Courage was taken for granted. But the use of intelligence awakened wonder and respect. Stratagems, providing they did not fail, were honourable ; the easy massacre of an unsuspecting enemy evoked no feelings but those of gladness, pride, and admiration. Not, perhaps, that primitive men were more faithless than their descendants of to-day, but that they went straight to their aim, and were more artless in their recognition of success as the only standard of morality.

Many examples of the truth of this quotation could be drawn from the pages of the Old Testament, from folk-lore, and from history both real and legendary. But the phenomenon is indeed so plain and so familiar that it needs no emphasis. What may require emphasis, on the other hand, is the effect which it has outside the range of military necessity. Human nature is not built in water-tight compartments ; its various activities are linked together as the cells of the body are united by fibrils of protoplasm. It seems impossible for people to cultivate every kind of successful fraud in one direction without enfeebling their resistance to lying and trickery in other directions. Thus we

find the metaphors of war, and much of the evil spirit within them, spreading to commerce, to diplomacy, to missionary religions, to politics, to industrial organizations, and to the settlement of disputes by law. In these and other departments of enterprise concealment and duplicity are a recognized rule in the game.

Lies are not only the cherished weapon of the strong; they are the favourite weapon of the weak. Religious oppression, as we have seen, gives rise to hypocrisy. Secular tyranny likewise forces the victim to a thousand forms of duplicity, active and passive. David Livingstone, speaking of the natives of East Africa, noted that "falsehood is a vice prevailing among the free, but still more among the slaves"; and Westermarck, in his *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, points out that "the duplicity of Orientals is very largely due to their despotic form of Government." Where men are enslaved, either in body or in mind, they cannot make way without fraud. Considering the innumerable generations through which war and tyranny combined to dominate mankind, it is not in the least surprising that the average man slips easily into any useful form of deceit. Nor is it surprising that he is apt to be less concerned about the deceit than about the risk of discovery. He is born of men who used deceit for the justifiable purpose of evading tyranny; and to these men it was fatal to be found out.

Among civilized races the sword and the Inquisition have given place to milder forms of subjugation.

Law, public opinion, social custom, and the pinchbeck god of respectability all exercise their power over the words and deeds of people who claim to live in freedom. When we find our neighbours exercising their wits to evade taxation, or outwardly conforming to observances which they inwardly despise and secretly neglect, or pretending to wealth and social position which are imaginary, we are witnessing the survival of tendencies once essential to life and security. Some of them are justified to-day because they minister to peace and comfort. Society openly admits that an absolutely frank and honest man would be a terror—literally a holy terror.

The habit of offering a false shadow in place of the real substance is so deeply ingrained in man that its influence extends to the higher regions of thought. How many of us hug our illusions, refusing to forgo their consolations, although we know, or at least suspect, that they are illusions? Rare, indeed, is the veracity of mind which makes one admit truth when it comes as a destroyer. In face of such an approach the spirit of man is only too ready to trail a deceptive wing. We see this happening, even in men of lofty mind, when some old familiar dogma is critically attacked; they use all the arts of verbal diplomacy to evade and confuse the enemy.

The history of religious controversy is full of examples of this subtle duplicity—subtle because it poses as a defence of truth. One of the most conspicuous of recent examples was the attitude of the Churches towards the theory of natural selection.

Darwin and his supporters were smothered in obloquy, their views distorted, their motives maligned; and later, when the theory proved invincible, doctrines which were once anathema were quietly absorbed and reproduced as part of the essential teaching of Christianity. Bishop Wilberforce, who drew upon himself the famous rebuke from Huxley, may stand as the type of man who, in the defence of faith, justifies the means by the end. And the Bishop who advises the hesitating ordinand to "throw his doubts overboard" will serve to point the moral that the greatest among us inherit the tendencies of men who were taught, by the fear of death or destitution, that discretion is the better part of valour.

In every-day life the liar and the thief are often one and the same person. A "dishonest servant" means one who tampers either with the truth or with his master's till—frequently with both. This affinity is partly a result of the way in which one vice helps the other; but it is also a sign of similar origin and history.

Primitive man had certainly no more sense of the rights of property than of the duty of truthfulness. His life depended upon his seizing what he could and holding on to what he had got. The conditions of the early struggle for existence favoured the man of prey. As soon as communities began to be organized, the business of taking and holding was transferred to the group. At this stage stealing became a crime. No group could hold together and lead an ordered life unless the goods held in

common or by individuals were more or less respected. But while the laws of property were thus being founded, group preyed upon group with the same ruthlessness and under the same sanction as man had preyed upon man. The most successful tribes were those with the finest record in wars of conquest. Throughout ancient history, and over a great part of modern history as well, it was regarded as quite fit and proper for one nation to attack another, annexing its territory, seizing its treasure, and levying tribute upon its people. By this process the strong, the clever, the well-organized, established their supremacy over the weak, the stupid, and the undisciplined, thus fulfilling the great scheme of human progress.

With such a past it is no wonder that mankind feels it necessary to defend the rights of property, both collective and individual, by force. This necessity is a heavy burden, not only on nations honestly disposed to peace, but upon society in its daily business of trade and travel and intercourse. Those ingenious statisticians who calculate how far the annual output of Bibles would reach towards the moon might be better occupied in calculating how much the inherited tendency to dishonesty costs the British or any other civilized nation in the course of a year. The sum would certainly be colossal, and its magnitude would serve as an index to the strength of tendencies once exercised as a virtue and now deplored as a vice.

Any one can elaborate the broad outlines of this picture from his own experience. Kleptomania is

merely an exaggerated form of a deep-seated impulse which is present in all of us and not fully subdued in many of us. The endless unrecorded pilfering in shops, factories, clubs, and households; the difficulty of persuading highly moral people—ladies especially—that finding is not legitimately keeping; the tendency to look upon defrauding a railway company as a venial form of sport: examples such as these could be multiplied indefinitely to show how the human organism still responds to the ancient impulse to snatch what lies within its power. The very phrase, "Honesty is the best policy," so warmly adopted by the pious, is a proof that mankind has been led to condemn dishonesty by calculation and not by instinct. Honesty indeed, like truthfulness in thought and speech, is an acquired taste.

A long catalogue of evil is associated with a habit which is a direct inheritance from the animal stage—the habit of acting swiftly upon impulse. The first law of life is not unlike Newton's Third Law of Motion: "To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction"; and among animals and the lower groups of humanity the reaction is almost immediate. At the first sign of danger the animal strikes an attitude of defence or takes to flight. Its very existence, as we have seen in earlier chapters, depends upon an automatic response to certain sights, sounds, and other sensations.

When we pass from the animal to the human we discover an increasing time-lag, as the electrical

engineer would call it, between the impulse and the response. The delay is caused by the intervention of thought, which considers the impulse and its instinctive answer in the light of experience, and decides whether that answer will be given, changed, or suppressed. Processes of thought are swift, and we are often hardly aware of the interval or of the motives which mingle to produce a particular result. Nevertheless, the processes do take place, whether they form a court of summary jurisdiction or a series of judgments and appeals; and the ability to postpone the response until it becomes the fruit of reasoning is the recognized mark of a trained mind and a high character.

When, however, the impulse is strong and awakens our deepest feelings, the automatic mechanism is apt to work before the mind is allowed to consider the situation. If we suffer an injury, we feel urged to strike back immediately and ruthlessly. This reaction lies at the very roots of our being. "Resentment," says Westermarck, "like protective reflex action, out of which it has gradually developed, is a means of protection for the animal. Its intrinsic object is to remove a cause of pain, or, what is the same, a cause of danger.....Both of them [to shun or to attack an enemy] are of supreme importance for the preservation of the species, and may consequently be regarded as elements in the animal's mental constitution which have been acquired by means of natural selection in the struggle for existence.....The need for protection thus lies at the foundation of resentment in all its forms."

Thus it follows that man, who yet bears within him so much of the animal, cannot subdue resentment or forgo revenge without a great effort of control over his instincts. "It is only by slow degrees," as Westermarck also points out, "that revenge has yielded to punishment, and the private avenger has been succeeded by the judge and the public executioner of his sentence."

Again: "In early ethics.....revenge is enjoined as a duty and forgiveness of enemies is despised." These tendencies are not confined to early ethics; or, at least, we of the later ethics are easily led to act on the ancient principles. Violence, cruelty, malicious intrigue, quarrelling, crime: a host of unlovely and deplorable consequences flow from obedience to a former necessity of human existence. So impressive are these forms of evil that the doctrine of non-resistance has been invented as a means of escape. It is a kind of asceticism in regard to the lust for revenge, and like all forms of asceticism it has not been very successful. Quakers, for example, are in a small minority, and even they have been known to show personal pugnacity (of a moral kind!) and to be quite capable of actively defending their rights against attack. The average moral man tries to find a middle way between revenge and non-resistance. The punitive measures which he takes, either personally or by proxy, are defended as a necessary means of protection; nevertheless, in taking them he would be more than a man if he did not feel some of the satisfaction which the savage enjoys in cracking the skull of his enemy.

The difficulty of making an adjustment between instinct and reason is graphically proved by the history of punishment. At first the principle of punishment was "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"—and the sooner the better. The group was not a whit behind the individual in readiness to follow out this principle, which belongs to the jungle. Imprisonment, torture, mutilation, and death were the means society employed to protect itself against the transgressor. Frequently, as in hanging men for sheep-stealing and transporting others for life on account of theft, the punishment was brutally out of proportion to the crime. Looking back over the history of penal codes, we are appalled by the infinite record of cruelty and suffering, and of degradation both to punisher and punished, caused by the elemental instinct of revenge. To-day we congratulate ourselves upon a vast improvement: capital punishment is reserved for murder, prisons have been reformed, sentences have been shortened, and the processes of trial have been surrounded by safeguards for the accused. But the figure of Justice still holds the sword as well as the scales, and when that sword strikes it awakens in each one of us, in spite of ourselves, an instinctive sense of satisfaction which links us with the past. Theoretically a prison is a place in which an offender may be reformed, or in which he shall be secluded for the protection of society. Practically it is a symbol of the revenge which society takes upon its enemies.

In the confusion of motives and methods under-

lying our treatment of criminals the conflict between native impulses and acquired restraints shows its effect. By slow degrees—very slow degrees—we are feeling our way towards a mode of treatment which will meet the end in view and will yet be free from the evil taint of primitive instinct. What that mode may be is suggested by Professor Carveth Read[1]: "There may be *retaliation* without *resentment;* for I say that no sane man who understands the nature of the ordinary criminal, his breeding and nurture, can possibly feel resentment towards him except as the insurrection of an instinct during the lapse of understanding."

In this last phrase lies the key to the natural history of evil.

All forms of moral evil contain an element of self-indulgence. The primitive ego surges up and overwhelms the strongest effort of self-control, or the power which, in the interests of morality or civilization, holds the basic instincts in check ceases to exercise itself. By one means or the other our most fundamental impulses find an outlet, and in so doing bring an immediate sense of pleasure so deep, so appropriate to our natural needs, that it is often sought or accepted in spite of its consequences.

Moral man, as a matter of fact, exists in a state of tension. The problem of ethics is largely one of maintaining that control—a kind of grip, half conscious and half unconscious, upon a sphincter

[1] *Natural and Social Morals*, p. 200.

muscle. It is natural, then, and indeed inevitable, that occasionally the grip should relax. In this simple fact we find an explanation of the recurrent orgies — sexual, religious, Bacchanalian, or all together—of savage and barbarian life. Among civilized peoples the reactions are more subdued and less frankly indulged; but certain events which take place during periods of sudden general excitement reveal the narrowness of the dividing line. "Mafficking" is a slang term for this kind of abandonment. The thoroughness of the reversion is a matter which people are more ready to realize than they are to talk about, but it may be thrown into relief by one illuminating item from the statistics of the Registrar-General. For a short period after the Armistice there was a rise in the proportion of suicides—a rise notable in the case of women under forty-five.

From the ascetic standpoint all degrees of self-indulgence are bad, but the general sense of mankind admits and approves of a limited range. The relaxation of control on certain occasions and in certain ways is regarded as a useful safety-valve for internal energies which, if dammed back completely, might produce a catastrophe. Thus the orgy of the savage becomes the modern dance, conducted according to a strict and decorous etiquette. The ancient feast, at which men gorged themselves and vomited that they might gorge again, becomes the modern banquet, at which the *gourmand* is encouraged to sublimate his love of food into the delicate enjoyment of the *gourmet*.

Idleness—"man," says Westermarck, "is naturally inclined to idleness"—is refined into recreation or amusement which, by relaxing the strain of toil, gives the organism strength to resume the monotony of daily labour.

In all these cases there is no definite line between beneficial pleasure and self-indulgence. Every country, every class of society, every Church, and every ethical group has its own standards, which are always changing, and not invariably consistent with themselves. The impossibility of arriving at any stable decision in this matter is but another example of the difficulty which lies at the root of the problem of evil—that of equating the demands of an evolving ideal with the inherited needs of the human constitution. Under such conditions it is only a religious enthusiast who would dream of imposing upon all mankind a rigid code of behaviour, especially one based on a series of absolute negations. The difficulty is a great deal too complex and subtle for a pocket solution; yet how many ardent souls, how many societies for the prevention or supervision of this and that form of inherited desire, are trying to impose their nostrums upon the world!

There is another aspect of the evil of self-indulgence which is of particular importance. Self-indulgence is not confined to eating, drinking, idleness, and other physical appetites. It has a mental phase. Men and women who think profoundly about life, who perceive its incongruities, its blind irrationalism, and who feel deeply the

suffering which it entails for no obvious and atoning end, are frequently in revolt against the conditions of existence. More ordinary folk, for their part, experience a perpetual conflict between their desire for happiness and the circumstances which thwart that desire and confront them with trials which they have neither the courage to face nor the wit to overcome. In both instances they are ready to open any door of escape from reality. They may find it in some form of art which throws a veil of beauty over the black and twisted truth of things; they may seek it in some crusade which fixes their energies on one absorbing ambition and enables them to forget what lies on either side of the path. Or they may discover it in the pursuit of some anodyne, wholly mental or acting through the body on the mind.

The mass of the people find this anodyne in fiction—using this word to include the stage and the kinematograph as well as the printed romance. Critics deplore the passion of the crowd for creative work which bears little relation to the facts of creation; they discover in it an evil-in-itself. But this love for a pretty and absurd illusion is rather the result of a deeper evil—the conflict between man and his environment. Popular fiction is childish, because the average human being finds satisfaction in slipping back to the primitive outlook, where his passions find ample play and the iron facts of life are moulded to his innate desires. We may argue that this indulgence in illusion is harmful; that it weakens the moral fibre and

distorts the understanding by which alone a true solution of our difficulties may be sought. But it would be a very austere hand which would snatch away from millions a form of comfort more effective for every-day purposes than the consolations of religion.

No comment upon self-indulgence could be complete without a note on alcohol. It is the physical anodyne *par excellence*. Primitive man used it brutally, drinking himself into so deep a forgetfulness that he could not taste the joy of forgetting. Modern man occasionally does the same, but for the most part he uses it with more restraint and with much better effect. Alcohol acts in the first instance upon the higher brain centres—those centres of perception and memory and reflection which induced the ancient sage to observe that "In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." The latest acquired stiffnesses, proprieties, and reserves dissolve under its influence and yield a free passage to the sense of companionship and freedom from restraint. The cares of memory, the insistent sorrows of the present, the painful anticipations which are so oppressive when the mind is in full activity, become vague and remote. For the time being, and by an organic process of elimination of the undesirable, man reaches a new and comfortable adjustment between the internal and the external.

Whether this adjustment should be welcomed as good or deplored as evil is a question not yet decided. Generations of close acquaintance with alcohol in its

various forms have merely served to build up masses of conflicting evidence. Even the Bible, which ought to be positive about an alleged source of evil, supplies both sides with encouragement, telling the one about wine which gladdeneth the heart of man, while being recommended for the stomach's sake, and assuring the other side that wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging. A similar contrast is shown in the literature about alcohol; homage is paid to it in eloquent prose and fervent verse, yet it is condemned in language of intemperate violence. One nation derives a huge annual revenue from the sale of alcohol, and another prohibits its citizens from touching it, except in the form of medicine.

This confusion might be made the text of a sermon about the littleness of man, but it is better regarded as a proof of the complexity of the problem of evil. Dozens of factors—climate, social customs, physiological features, the standard of education and moral control, the character of the prevailing taste, and so on—must be considered before a scientific judgment can be delivered on the question whether a community should or should not abandon alcohol. From one particular standpoint, however, the question may be put in a simpler form. Assuming that alcohol in some form or another is not in itself unhealthy, the issue is whether the inherited tendency to excess should be met by locking alcohol away in the medicine chest or by cultivating the power of control over the use of it. Stated thus, the issue comes into line with every other moral issue, and the answer is almost automatic. To

nations, as to individuals, the cure for evil does not lie in the impossible attempt to destroy its roots, which are the roots of life itself. It lies in the effort to gain efficient control over forces which, unchecked or badly governed, result in evil.

X

THE CURE

THE hope of discovering a cure for evil is probably as old as man himself, or at least as the first man who became aware of himself. And if we judge from the chronic way in which the hope has been disappointed, we may conjure up a vision of the last surviving man, heir to the accumulated wisdom of the world, sustained during his final hours with the prospect of discovering the formula which eluded the learning and the piety of his ancestors.

One of the first inferences to be drawn from the natural history of evil is that no such formula exists. Evil takes too many shapes and is too mutable and elusive for treatment by any single prescription. Its roots lie much too deep in the past to be displaced by a single effort. Recognition of this fact may kill all those joyous expectations of a millennium with which saints and reformers have warmed their enthusiasm, but it is not without its compensations. Those who dreamed of a world made perfect usually insisted upon a preliminary massacre of the wicked. They were little better than the advocates of a post-mortem cure which involved putting the many in hell while only the chosen few enjoyed heaven. All the traditional cures for evil are, in fact, pessimistic. They postulate the hopeless depravity of the mass of

the human race and look for some catastrophe, or a supernatural change of heart, to redeem mankind.

Science is less utopian and also less despairing. It realizes that alterations in human character take place slowly—much more slowly, indeed, than the progress of material civilization. It gives full value to the inertia of inherited tendencies, and appreciates how limited and how recent of acquisition is the power of control over them. On the other hand, it brings the problem of evil down to a level at which it can be treated with some hope of definite results. Instead of turning backwards to an alleged revelation, it searches for knowledge. Instead of beginning with some metaphysical notion of mind, it probes the mechanism of thought and emotion to discover its true mode of operation. Above all, instead of treating human beings as so many castings of predordained design, it regards humanity as one great organism, evolving slowly from animal beginnings till it becomes aware of its advance and able, in ever-increasing degree, to direct and hasten its own progress.

It must be admitted that our knowledge of the mechanism which both suffers and causes evil is as yet meagre. Only yesterday did man take science as his guide through the labyrinths of his own being. Before he adopted the standpoint of evolution, the conscious mind appeared to be the whole mind. When psychology became comparative—when, that is to say, man sought in the nervous system of animals the ground plan of his own mental structure—the importance of the unconscious mind was

gradually realized. The psychologist of to-day is busily exploring the dark and tortuous passages of that complex inheritance. He has gone but a little way beneath the threshold of consciousness; nevertheless, his discoveries are of great promise. Each one brings a fresh understanding of the springs of human nature, within which lies the one-time mystery of evil. The key of that mystery is to be found in the under-world of instinctive energies, and its relation with the upper-world of conscious activity. These two worlds are for ever at war with each other, and the conflict is painful and persistent because the under-world is so ancient, so powerful, so wonderfully organized, and because the eye of the conscious mind sees so little of its constitution and its customs.

The first step towards any practical treatment of the problem of evil is, therefore, to gain some notion of the geography of these two worlds—the worlds of the conscious and the unconscious, of control and of automatism. In previous chapters there have been various glimpses into both territories, but it will be useful to sum up the main features, which will show how the elements of control are connected with the elements of instinct which they are called upon to govern.

The primary function of the nervous system is to convey a stimulus along an ingoing (or afferent) nerve and to transmit the response along an outgoing (or efferent) nerve. Thus a sensation—touch, smell, taste, or sight—leads to the appropriate action. The spinal cord is largely made up of

afferent and efferent nerves, the former being arranged in the back or dorsal position and the latter in the ventral position. It is divided lengthwise into two similar parts linked together with nerves; and each half consists of internal grey matter with white matter outside in longitudinal tracts. The tract at the back is called the pyramidal tract and plays a very important part in controlling the tangled nerves in the grey matter of the cord.

The upper end of the spinal cord expands into a knob called the medulla oblongata, which is surmounted by the cerebellum, or little brain, in which are the lower brain centres. Higher still, occupying by far the largest portion of the human cranium, is the cerebrum, or large brain, which consists of two hemispheres. These hemispheres are apart from the little brain and the spinal cord, but they are connected with the cord through the pyramidal track.

A rough notion of the purpose served by each of these main divisions is gained by observing what takes place in animals when the cerebral hemispheres are removed. A frog thus treated is able to breathe; its heart continues beating; it hops when pinched and swims when placed in water; but if it be left alone it remains passive and ultimately dies. A pigeon in the same condition will fly and alight when it is thrown into the air, but it will not peck at food or fly away when frightened. If its cerebellum is also removed, the bird cannot maintain its balance. These facts show that the little brain and the spinal cord are

concerned in co-ordinating such movements as locomotion, breathing, circulation, and other functions in which consciousness has no place.

The large brain is therefore superimposed upon a nervous mechanism which is amazingly complex, but definitely automatic in its character. And although the large brain is the organ of control, its activity is not necessarily accompanied by consciousness. Various positions have been mapped out as the areas of control for certain purposes. The lobes at the lower portion of the back are concerned with sight; those at the side with hearing; and others with movements of the leg, arm, neck, face, tongue, and various parts of the body. Intellectual processes take place in the frontal lobes. It has also been ascertained that, amid this intricate network of nerves and ganglions, only those of a thin outside layer—the cortex—are associated with consciousness. The great bulk of the machinery, so to speak, operates without conscious guidance.

A hint of how the machinery works can be derived from observing the actions of animals in which the arrangement of parts is simpler than in the case of human beings. Professor Lloyd Morgan, in his *Introduction to Comparative Psychology*, uses the chicken effectively as a model. Almost the first thing which a chicken does after emerging from the shell is to begin the fundamental business of pecking. Its earliest pecks are at random, being directed at stones and pieces of excrement as well as at food. Gradually, however,

the chicken begins to ignore the unpleasant or useless things and to confine its attention to its proper diet. The way in which this control is acquired is indicated, in a very rough fashion, by the accompanying diagram (p. 129).

The outline represents the spinal cord with its upper bulb (the medulla oblongata) connected with the brain with its various nerve centres. The course of the pyramidal tract from the brain to the spinal cord is also indicated. When the chicken looks at a seed or stone it receives a stimulus on the retina of the eye, and this stimulus, if not controlled by the brain, leads by reflex action to a peck at the object. That is what happens at the chicken's first peck. The act of pecking, however, conveys two new impressions—the peck stimulus (arising from the contact between the beak and the object) and the taste stimulus. Thus the object sends three messages by ingoing nerves to the brain—one message affecting the visual centre, another the taste centre, and the third the motor centre. From these three centres messages pass to the control centre, which sends the appropriate response by way of the pyramidal tract. The nature of the response is the resultant of the messages, which are co-ordinated by the visual, taste, and motor centres and forwarded to the control centre, which dispatches the order to peck or not to peck.

By some such process the chicken builds up a habit of discriminating between pleasant and unpleasant things merely by looking at them. As

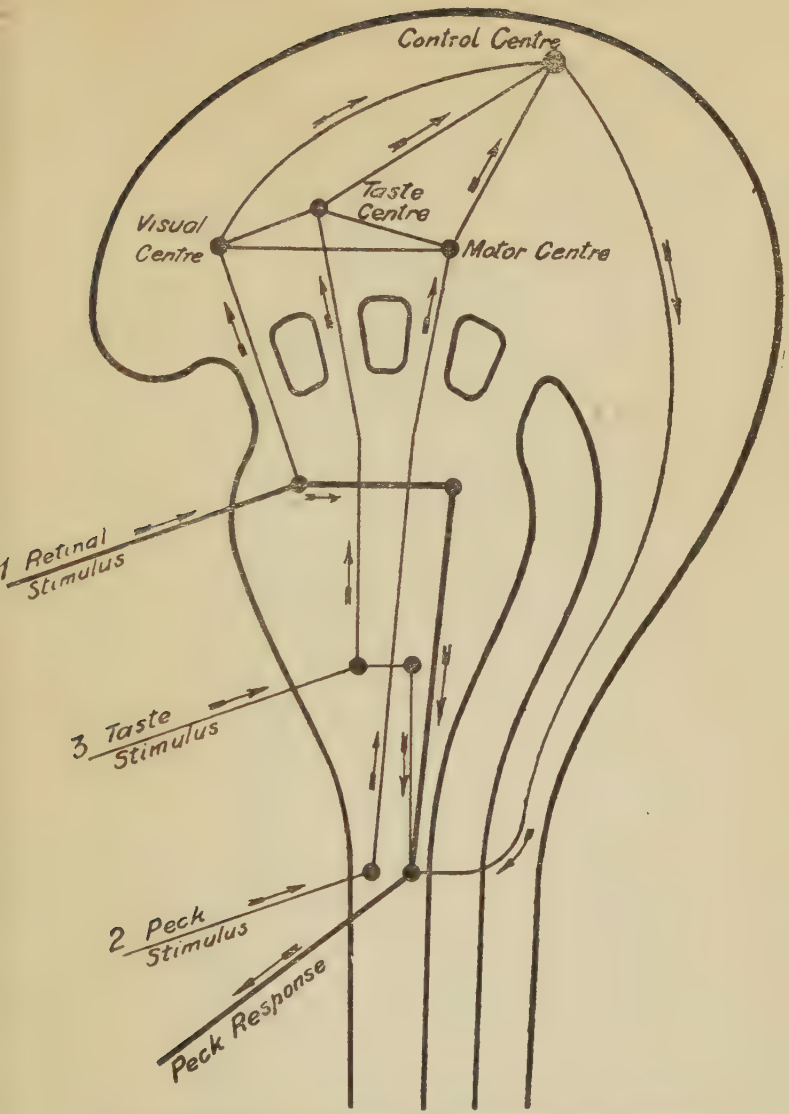

Diagram representing the relation between control and automatic action in the brain of a chicken. (Adapted from Professor Lloyd Morgan's *Introduction to Comparative Psychology*.)

time goes on the habit becomes more closely automatic: it is as if the tracks through the brain labyrinth had been worn smooth.

This simple instance embodies two lessons which are of importance in relation to the development of control. One is the tendency of responses which were at first controlled to sink to the level of the automatic. Impressions which, when new, roused consciousness to act or to refrain from acting now pass unnoticed and achieve their results through the unconscious mind alone. As each individual grows older he increases the number of nervous operations carried out unconsciously. He builds up a complex structure of habit beneath the threshold of consciousness. And in the course of evolution we find a similar development going on among species. The larger and more complex brains of the higher animals are the repositories of accumulated experience adapted to the environment in which these animals evolved. Our decisions on many matters were thus registered for us, in our unconscious minds, by the responses of animals which survived the struggle for existence in past ages. Not only has habit an inherited physical basis, but that foundation was slowly built up by an almost endless number of reactions repeated and added to through the millions of years occupied by the evolution of life. The result is a system of forces more intricate than anything else in the universe—a system in which cells of infinite complexity are woven into a pattern of which we have traced only some of the broader outlines.

The reasoning part of the mind is heir to this mechanism, but has no direct control over its operation. Herein lies the second lesson just mentioned. Self-conscious mind, which receives, deliberates, and foresees, represents the latest phase of mental evolution. It is put in command of the forces lodged in the unconscious mind, but is given no information, through the senses, of the real nature and disposition of these forces. Many of these forces are wholly beyond its control, and some of them are only partially subject to it; at any time the insurrection of one of them, unknown and unsuspected, may dethrone the power of control. The situation may be likened to a monarchy which issues orders to subjects who never receive them or are in chronic revolt. Perhaps a closer simile is afforded by the electrical arrangement known as a "shunt circuit." The unconscious mind represents a vast system of established circuits in which strong currents are perpetually flowing; and the reason represents the intermittent action of current, in a kind of added loop line, whose function is to suppress or modify the currents in the main system.

The organ of rational control, in short, seems a kind of afterthought on the part of nature. In the life of most individuals it reaches its full power at a period when the energies which call for judicious government are waning. The problem before us is to give to youth and manhood the disciplined will which is too often reserved for wise old age.

The first step towards a solution of this problem is a clear understanding of the forces involved. Our

standard systems of training and education are derived from a time when nothing was known or suspected about the unconscious mind. Instincts and desires which conflicted with moral precepts were regarded as signs of depravity, essentially evil and abominable. So arose the regime of relentless punishment, of scourging and asceticism, and all the morbid manifestations due to a "conviction of sin." Generations have endured untold misery, both of body and of spirit, on account of this regime; yet its efficiency as a tonic for moral control has been very low.

Religious enthusiasts still deplore the difficulty of infusing a sense of sin, with its accompanying meekness and self-depreciation, into either children or adults. Normal folk find themselves subject to various instinctive impulses which, if obeyed, lead to a profound sense of satisfaction. When they are told that these impulses are wholly bad, their instinct vigorously denies the accusation, however faithfully they may repeat it in their prayers and lessons. The punishment inflicted for yielding to one of these impulses strengthens this resentment; and the conscious mind, even though it drives this resentment to the depths of the unconscious as an evil thing, suffers a loss of some of the rational desire to secure control.

The inefficiency of punishment (and of its obverse, reward) in educating the power of control is shown by the fact that the fate of the sinner in hell and the bliss of the virtuous one in heaven have always been used to buttress the earthly conse-

quences of bad and good behaviour. Every device has been used to heighten fear on the one hand and to embellish the attractive vision on the other. But experience has shown that a mental picture of consequences, near or remote, has little influence on the deep-rooted springs of human action. Even when the consequences are accepted as inevitable, their prospective weight is not felt upon the control centres which govern action. Generally, moreover, they suffer from the weakness of not being quite convincing. What will happen in the next world is quite problematical; and as for this world, it is not obvious that the wicked are always miserable and the good always happy. Both instinct and reason are apt to reject a moral order typified by a judge with a gift in one hand and a rod of correction in the other.

Education, as hitherto conducted, has idolized this figure in the religious teaching which accompanies instruction on subjects which have little direct reference to moral development. Of late years, however, the elements of vindictive punishment and capricious reward have become fainter, and there is an increasing tendency to give direct ethical teaching which makes virtue appeal to the youthful mind as something beautiful and worth while for its own sake.

This is a great advance; but it does not seem to bring us to the critical point of strengthening the links between conscious control and unconscious impulse. One may argue, indeed, that it is in their devotion to athletics that our schools come nearest

to this goal. Games provide an outlet for instinctive energy, and they associate the exercise of that energy with many restraints which, while readily accepted because they are traditional, establish a habit of control over the ego in the interests of the group. Boys who will gleefully disobey and defraud their masters would never dream of cheating at cricket. This fact is so commonplace that its significance is too readily overlooked. It means that in the one case the effort of control is made willingly and almost spontaneously, while in the other the pressure comes from outside as a mandate which seems an arbitrary instrument of subjection.

So many reforms of education have been proposed, and opinions are so violently divided on the subject, that one hesitates to suggest any change in even the confused and contradictory methods of training now applied in the majority of cases. Nevertheless, one would urge a close study of the specific problem of developing the power of control, from the standpoint of comparative psychology, and especially of the power and importance of the unconscious mind. Educational systems are mainly devoted to instruction, to the packing of brain cells with knowledge of languages, continents and oceans, kings and queens, wars and discoveries, mechanics and physics. Formation of character is secondary, and is considered more a matter of "atmosphere" than of definite training on a scientific basis. Many teachers, perhaps, would deny that it is susceptible to such training. They look upon will power as a transcendental faculty which may be affected by religious

factors, but cannot be brought under systematic guidance. In fact, however, the power of control is as natural a possession as instinct, and it is liable to be strengthened or weakened in many ways.

The Red Indians, by a process of graduated trial, acquired a remarkable power of controlling the effects of pain. The Japanese, by their inculcation of the spirit of *bushido*, managed to gain control over the primary instinct of self-preservation. Military discipline, moreover, proves that a certain mode of training can give man superiority over some of the strongest forces that lurk in the unconscious mind. These examples are not perfect, but they suggest that the mechanism of control need not be left to such influences as "atmosphere," or athletics, or fear, or to a rational faculty which the young do not possess. It is possible to conceive a system of moral athletics which will gradually strengthen the power of control until its exercise becomes a pleasurable habit rather than a rare and painful effort reluctantly made in obedience to some form of compulsion.

Anything which has so far been done along these lines has been empirical, and the success of any really scientific attempt depends upon a further knowledge of the unconscious mind and its relations with the conscious mind.

A good deal of light, as we have already hinted, is thrown upon the unconscious mind by the study of comparative psychology. The lower animals represent various stages of that instinctive life which, after a long course of evolution, is registered

in our nervous system; and by analysing the behaviour of these animals we can trace the design of some of the mental mechanism we have inherited from our pre-human ancestors. The life of infants and children also assists, since we can watch the purely instinctive life gradually coming under the domination, more or less, of control acquired through consciousness. Various forms of mental disease, in which instincts are badly governed or allowed free play, are helpful in much the same way as the examination of morbid tissue is a guide to the nature of healthy tissue.

During the last twenty years, however, there has grown up a new method of probing the secrets of the unconscious. This method is called Psycho-Analysis. It was first developed by Freud, Jung, and other Continental psychologists, and has been carried on by workers in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere until to-day it claims to be the most powerful instrument for dealing with those subtle volcanic energies which so often make sport of our claim to be rational beings.

It is not at all an easy matter to give a short and clear account of psycho-analysis. Although so many minds were busy on the subject for so many years, the world had to wait until 1920 for an elementary text-book[1] which could be understood by an intelligent inquirer with the ordinary amount

[1] *Psycho-Analysis: A Brief Account of the Freudian Theory*, by Barbara Low, B.A. (Allen and Unwin; 5s. net). A somewhat fuller but still very clear and readable account is given in *The New Psychology*, by A. G. Tansley (Allen and Unwin; 10s. 6d. net).

of time and application. For this unusual state of affairs the strangeness and complexity of the subject are largely to blame; but only those who idolize Freud (and they are many) can avoid feeling a grudge against him for his habit of manufacturing words. One has almost to learn a new language before feeling at home among the psycho-analysts. This has had the effect of making psycho-analysis a kind of cult; those who have been initiated are liable to look upon themselves as superior persons who have digested more wonderful things than common folk can swallow.

There is nothing really new in the outline of the human mind upon which psycho-analysis builds its theories and its methods of improving the power of control. It is, in fact, the outline supplied by study from the point of view of evolution. Freud sees, just as the evolutionist sees, the conscious mind in conflict with the inherited tendencies registered in the unconscious mind; only he speaks of the Reality Principle (represented by the conscious mind which tries to adapt itself to the conditions of existence) and the Pleasure Principle (represented by the instincts which call for gratification at all costs). From this starting-point he goes on to examine what happens when an instinctive desire is repressed by the censor which carries out the orders of the Reality Principle. The desire is forced down into the unconscious; it is not destroyed; its energies are merely dammed back in an underground cavern. There they strive to find a new outlet, and, especially if they are very powerful, they discover one or

more, through which they push their way and manifest themselves in various physical, mental, or moral disorders. Sometimes the individual is aware of those disorders, although he may not suspect their origin in the unconscious. They take the form of obsessions, of unreasoning likes and dislikes, of slips of the tongue, of inability to remember certain things, of outbursts of irritation and violence for no adequate and visible cause. In other cases they are apparent to observers in mannerisms of which the individual is unconscious.

The business of the psycho-analyst is to notice all these tricks of the unconscious mechanism and to trace them down to their hidden source. It is a difficult business, not only because the mechanism is so intricate and so obscure, but also because the source, when discovered (or alleged to be discovered), seems to bear no relation to the nature of the tricks. Various methods of approach are adopted. All the little fidgetty habits of the patient are noted —the unconscious movements of the hands and feet, the nervous twitchings, and so on—and an attempt is made to interpret the emotional disturbance they represent. The psycho-analyst also tries to lead the mind back from association to association until some forgotten incident in youth or childhood is brought to light. No association, however trivial in appearance or repellent to the fastidious sense, is neglected, since it may serve to carry the mind back to the crucial point. Dreams are also carefully studied, because they show the unconscious mind at work without the logical and

moral restraints inspired by the waking mind. Freud and others have done an immense amount of work in the interpretation of dreams, and many of their conclusions, it must be confessed, seem altogether too fantastic and far-fetched to be reliable. Nevertheless, the dream is undoubtedly a gateway to the unconscious, and it remains worth exploring even though we are not convinced by everything that ardent psycho-analysts say they have discovered there.

One example of a simple kind will serve to illustrate how the process of psycho-analysis is applied in practice. During the War the parents of a young officer were concerned about the possible effect upon his health of the abnormal conditions at the front. For many years he had been subject to violent nightmare, and it was feared that, although he was otherwise healthy and was a keen, courageous soldier, the trouble would be aggravated to a degree which would lead to serious nervous disturbance. The case was submitted to a psycho-analyst, who, after a number of "sittings," managed to revive a recollection of an incident which had occurred in the patient's childhood and been forgotten. He had received a prolonged shock when interfering with an electrolier. The nightmares were accordingly traced to the suppression of this unpleasant recollection below the level of consciousness. Thereafter the attacks were much less violent, although the patient went through severe experiences in France.

The psycho-analyst would probably say that in

this case the cure was not complete because the analysis (which was, as a matter of fact, interrupted by military duties) was not carried far enough. Further probing might have led to the unlocking of a deeper repression, most likely in connection with some powerful instinct. For example—to take another kind of case—the aversion of a patient to marriage may find its ultimate origin in a premature revelation of the phenomena of sex at an age when it made a violent impression yet was soon forgotten. Release from the aversion may come when this origin is discovered by psycho-analysis; it is as if the unconscious mind had made a confession and allowed the pent-up energies to escape.

In other cases the psycho-analyst finds some particular form of mental suffering or moral conflict associated, in the obscure way which is the habit of the unconscious mind, with a repressed desire which cannot, for social reasons, be allowed free play or indeed any direct play at all; then he tries to sublimate the energies released. A familiar example of this sublimation (which is defined as "the employment of energy belonging to a primitive instinct in a new and derived—i.e., non-primitive—channel") is the use of sexual energy in creative artistic work. Assuming that psycho-analysis discovers a neurotic trouble or moral conflict to be due to the repression of a strong primitive impulse, the treatment suggested is not a mere condemnation of that impulse as inherently vile, but an effort to give it an outlet in a healthy and ethical direction.

In military movements the aim of a commander

is to discover what the enemy is doing on the other side of the hill. In the moral struggle for the conquest of evil it is equally important for the conscious mind to know what the unconscious mind is doing. Psycho-analysis claims to provide that knowledge, at least to a degree which enables people to be cured of obsessions, bad habits, abnormal tendencies, and feebleness of will in certain directions. It has a great deal to say on the upbringing of children, especially during the first five years of their lives; and it offers a means of adjustment between the demands of the "higher" life and the needs of the "lower." Psycho-analysts admit, however, that the process involved is a slow one, intricate and full of pit-falls to the untrained or impulsive investigator. Treatment by psycho-analysis may occupy many months, and it calls for a high degree of patience from both analyst and subject. On this point a passage from Miss Low's book (p. 165) may be quoted:—

> And here let it be noted that Freud's theory propounds no easy and absolute "solutions" of problems—nothing, in the words of William James, "to lie back and rest upon," no determined goal reached nor reachable; it does, however, supply us, first and foremost, with *knowledge* of the psyche's problems and methods of obtaining that knowledge, and were its achievement no more than this it would still go far to revolutionize human thought and activity. But, as has been pointed out, it can also help to *solve* these problems, bringing extraordinary illumination to bear upon all kinds of hitherto non-comprehended matters in personal and wider life.

> In certain spheres, especially, the findings of Freud are very far-reaching, and may call for great modification of current ideas and customs—namely, in the spheres of Family-life, Child-training, and systematic Educational work.

The literature of psycho-analysis contains many examples of cases where this method of treatment has brought about a balance of control and activity where other methods—medical, moral, and religious—had failed to make the adjustment. Judged by its fruits, the tree is good. As Miss Low says (p. 157): "It is because the psycho-analytic theory, working empirically, has looked forward to 'fruits, consequences, facts,' and found these latter in such abundance, that its validity holds good, leaving aside for the moment the question of its agreement with many other already known scientific theories." At the same time we must bear in mind that the method *is* empirical, and that the various interpretations of dreams, and the explanations given of repressions and other events in the unconscious mind, have not been brought to a scientific test. Perhaps they never will be, and in the meantime we are faced with the possibility that, although the psycho-analyst effects cures, his reading of the unconscious may not be quite accurate. There is a strong family likeness between these cures and those described in books on hypnotism. And this likeness suggests that there may be an element of hypnotic suggestion, though unsuspected and undesired, in the psycho-analytic method of gaining control over the unconscious mind.

The psycho-analyst does not hold a very high opinion of hypnotism. While psycho-analysis discovers the energies whose suppression is causing trouble, and releases them and re-directs them in favourable channels, hypnotism, he asserts, merely neutralizes the energies by damping down their effects. Hypnotism, that is to say, treats the symptoms, while psycho-analysis goes to the root of the disease. Success in hypnotic treatment is like health which depends upon a medicine bottle. With psycho-analysis, on the other hand, the patient is gradually brought back to a normal balanced condition without any artificial aid.

As we are largely in the dark about what really takes place in both hypnotic and psycho-analytic treatment, it would be unwise to speak positively on these claims. Time and further study will decide the matter. Meanwhile, it is a well-established fact that hypnotism does afford a means of controlling instinctive forces which exist beneath the threshold of consciousness and operate as causes of evil.

This fact is apt to be obscured by the prejudice arising from the early history of hypnotism. Just as chemistry grew out of alchemy and astronomy out of astrology, so hypnotism started as "mesmerism," in which there was a strong element of fantasy and humbug. Thanks to this unhappy beginning, the doctors who first used the hypnotic method for suppressing pain in operations, and for the treatment of nervous and other diseases, were ostracized by the medical profession. Their methods and pretensions were violently ridiculed, but a small

band of investigators continued to use hypnotic suggestion, and eventually it became a recognized instrument of cure—not used so freely as the bottle of medicine, but employed with increasing success by a number of specialists.

The hypnotic method is really a development of the power of suggestion. Every one must be able to recall cases where the confident assertion that a thing was so-and-so made it appear such, although it was in reality nothing of the kind. For example, a doctor told a patient that he was going to give her a powerful aperient; by a mistake she was given a narcotic with no laxative power, but the effect on the patient was precisely what had been suggested to her. Another homely illustration is that of a Scotsman in London who constantly complained that it was impossible to get good whisky south of the Tweed. His son went on a visit to Scotland, and promised to bring back a bottle of the genuine article. For one reason or another—possibly his selfish devotion to the genuine article—he forgot about his promise until he had returned. In order to prevent disappointment, he bought a bottle of the brand which his father was accustomed to drink under protest, removed the label, put a new cork in the bottle, and presented the gift with due ceremony. His father solemnly tasted the divine liquor, and reverentially declared that it was perfect.

These are illustrations of the effect of suggestion in the normal condition. Hypnotism is a way of making an individual abnormally sensitive to suggestion. The hypnotic condition is well defined by

Dr. Betts Taplin[1] as "a changed mental state which renders the patient much more receptive to the suggestion of the operator, and sets in motion somewhere in his mental 'get-up' that power over his organism which is able to carry them out." Various means are adopted for inducing the hypnotic state,[2] but those most generally employed to-day depend chiefly upon suggestions from the operator which bring the patient into a drowsy passive condition. Except in the deepest stage known as "somnambulism" (which is rarely induced), the patient remains conscious of his surroundings and of what is said to him. The deeper the stage the more plastic he is to suggestions; but at any stage the suggestions made to him tend to remain effective and to become a permanent part of what Dr. Betts Taplin calls his "mental 'get-up.'"

Two points about hypnotic treatment need to be emphasized. One is that nobody can be hypnotized without his consent and, indeed, willing co-operation. The second is that suggestions contrary to the patient's moral sense have no effect. "Personally," writes Dr. Milne Bramwell, "I have never seen a single hypnotic somnambule who did not possess and exercise the power of resisting suggestions contrary to his moral sense." When the hypnotic state is not so deep as somnambulism the power of

[1] *Hypnotism*, by A. Betts Taplin, L.R.C.P. and L.M. (Edin.), second edition, p. 84.

[2] They are described in Dr. Betts Taplin's book, but more fully in Dr. Milne Bramwell's *Hypnotism: Its History, Practice, and Theory*.

resistance to degrading suggestions is, of course, greater. The claim is made, in fact, that hypnotism can be used only to increase the power of control of the mind, raising the moral tone.

This claim is of the highest importance in connection with the problem which most concerns us here. Hypnotism has been usefully applied not only in surgery and in treating hysteria, neurasthenia, insomnia, obsessions, and many other troubles in which no moral element appears, but also in cases of dipsomania, drug habit, sexual disorders, and defective moral control generally. In these cases the individual, as represented by the higher brain centres, is frequently anxious to overcome the habits into which he has fallen; but the nerve system in which the habit is registered is too strongly organized to be affected by the impulses sent out from the higher centres. Under hypnotic treatment the nerve system, by which, say, the thought of drink leads to an inevitable desire to indulge, is gradually loosened and the desire changed into dislike or indifference.

The suggestions made are not, however, of a wholly negative character. The hypnotist is able to strengthen impulses which give a healthy outlet for energies which are expending themselves harmfully; and he is able to suggest new occupations and new ambitions to displace the old ones which are the cause of suffering.

This aspect of the subject is of special interest in the training of abnormal children. The International Congress of Hypnotism in Paris, 1889,

adopted the following conclusion : " Suggestion constitutes an excellent auxiliary in the education of vicious and degenerate children, especially where there are habits of lying, cruelty, inveterate idleness, or cowardice." The Congress also emphasized the value of suggestion in dealing with functional troubles, some of which are often treated as "bad habits"—incontinence of urine, nervous twitchings, onanism, and night terrors. The cures which have been effected in such directions are so numerous and so remarkable that they ought to be more seriously considered than they generally are in connection with reformatory systems. Too often reformatories are merely places of incarceration for cases which are regarded as hopeless. They are dominated by the theological conception of sin, and the possibility of using scientific means to straighten out the twist in the natures of these unhappy victims of heredity is disregarded.

As this important by-way of education is so little known, we may give a typical case from Dr. Milne Bramwell's records[1]:—

> No. 70.—Miss ——, aged 13, March, 1894. Bad family history. Before the patient was born her mother suffered from melancholia. The child herself had been mentally peculiar from infancy; she was persistently untruthful, deceitful, insolent, and dirty in her habits. She had been addicted to self-abuse from the age of seven. On several occasions she had stolen money from servants and others—sometimes considerable amounts. She had been expelled from school, and had to be kept at home.

[1] *Hypnotism: Its History, Practice, and Theory*, p. 234.

She was strong, healthy, and well grown, with nothing abnormal about the head or palate.

After consultation with Dr. Savage, the patient was hypnotized three times a week from March to May, 1894; this was followed by marked improvement, and the treatment was repeated at intervals during the next two years. Complete recovery took place, and up to the present date (1903) there has been no relapse.

The International Congress already mentioned recommended that "suggestion should be confined to cases where the usual methods of education have failed, and medical men alone should employ it." Further, "it is not necessary to hypnotize normal children; ordinary training ought to be sufficient for them." It may be pointed out, however, that there is no hard-and-fast line between normal and abnormal. If extreme cases can be cured by a sustained course of hypnotic treatment, a moderate application of the same method ought to be useful in the case of "besetting sins" which are sufficiently troublesome although they do not place the child in the category of the vicious or degenerate.

Turning again to the case of the adult, it may be asked whether the element of the abnormal in each of us does not justify the wider use of hypnotic suggestion in dealing with the defects of control which lie at the root of so much evil. The prospect of all and sundry undergoing hypnotic treatment, as people used to "take the waters," is perhaps rather formidable; there is, however, a mode of treatment by suggestion which does not involve the formal preparations required in hypnotism. This

mode is known as auto-suggestion. A vast amount of quackery has grown up around it, and the simple principle embodied in it has been lost in clouds of verbiage. From some of the books on the subject one might gather that anybody, by taking sufficient thought, can make himself a Napoleon or a Rockefeller.

The kernel of truth can be stated shortly. Our subconscious mind is readily influenced by suggestions when we are in the drowsy state of hypnotism; similarly, but in a less degree, quiet, dogmatic assertions made by ourselves to ourselves in the normal waking state have an effect upon our subconscious mind. This will be the more readily understood if we note how people are impressed by repeated suggestions by others, even when no element of hypnotism enters into the case. A familiar example is afforded by the story of the man who became really ill after his friends had conspired to tell him, in succession, that he looked ill. Each individual may apply the same method to himself. He may depress himself by telling himself that he is ill; and he may bring a painful sensation to any part of his body upon which he concentrates a fearful attention. Likewise, he may provide himself with a tonic by stedfastly holding to optimistic thoughts, and he may allay pain by insisting that he feels none. This is the element of truth which does its best to leaven the mystic lump of Christian science and various forms of "New Thought."

The connection between such forms of auto-suggestion and hypnotism is illustrated by the fact that

suggestions made to oneself at the moment of dropping off to sleep (when the state of the mind is similar to the induced hypnotic state) are exceptionally strong. The power which many people have of waking at an unusual hour is perhaps the most familiar example. Their last thought before dreamy half-consciousness passes into the unconsciousness of sleep is a determination to rouse at the chosen hour; and the order is duly carried out by the unconscious mind. In many hypnotic experiments the subject has been told to perform certain acts, such as writing down figures, at a particular hour; the acts are duly performed, although the conscious mind has no recollection of the order and does not know why it feels impelled to carry it out. A remarkable feature of these experiments is that the unconscious mind can rapidly make calculations which the conscious mind is unable to complete without difficulty and mistakes.

The whole subject of suggestion is indeed so fascinating and so full of possibilities that it will repay the closest study. Enough has been said about it, perhaps, to show that suggestion of one sort or another does provide a lever for raising the power of control. Already it has played an important part in treating various forms of evil; and its usefulness will be greatly extended when more of our medical men, educationalists, and sociologists turn their minds to it earnestly and without prejudice.

The cures for evil which we have been considering deal with the problem from the standpoint of

the individual. That is to say, they take the human organism as it is shaped in the mould of heredity, and they try to alter its performances for the better. No attempt is made to change the mould itself, so that the race as a whole may, in its progress from generation to generation, display increasing power of control.

Not so long ago it was a common belief that character could be radically altered by environment. On this theory the evils of slum life could be rooted out by abolishing the slums and housing the people in clean, well-designed dwellings. Experience showed, however, that the improvement was little more than superficial: the transplanted slum-dwellers soon re-created their environment of dirt and degradation. The real trouble lay not in the circumstances, but in the essential character of the people—a character determined in its innate features by their ancestry.

In the breeding of animals men have long appreciated the vital importance of heredity. They take care to breed only from sound stock which possesses the characters they want; and through generations of selective breeding they have produced types which have advanced a long way beyond the original stock. In the case of human stock, however, they have let matters go very much their own way. A broad line has been drawn between mankind and the brute, between mere animals and creatures made in the image of God, gifted with free will and immortal souls. Any interference with the fertility of all sorts and conditions of men has been denounced as

impious; the results, whether good or evil, were accepted as an expression of the will of Providence.

With the weakening of theological power over the mind this policy of *laissez-faire* has become discredited. Public opinion is no longer inclined to tolerate the marriage of people with some hereditary taint, physical or moral or mental. It feels that even the blessing of an archbishop cannot sanctify such a union for the procreation of children. Nevertheless, it is still apt to be amused or annoyed at the proposal to apply in human affairs anything like the same principles as are applied in the rearing of stock. Behind its scepticism on the subject of eugenics lies the old reluctance to admit human descent from animal forbears and the full extension of the laws of heredity to the lords of creation. Time and training are required to bring home the fact that men do possess the power of control over heredity, and that this power may be used to raise the average character of a community. As Mr. and Mrs. Whetham say[1]: "Where the human race is concerned men have now the power consciously to direct them [the workings of heredity] into barren or profitable channels. The whole fate of civilization hangs on the question whether this mighty engine of construction or destruction is to be used for good or evil."

The importance of heredity can be brought home by two extreme cases. In the families of Darwin, Wedgwood, and Galton there was a strain of

[1] *Heredity and Society*, by William Cecil Dampier Whetham and Catherine Durning Whetham (1912), p. 8.

scientific ability, and in five generations these interconnected families produced no fewer than sixteen men of marked scientific attainments, of whom nine were Fellows of the Royal Society. At the other extreme lies a group of about 830 individuals, all descended from five sisters born about 1760. A large proportion of the 830 have been in prison, some of them for serious crimes. Many of them have been paupers, and the women frequently consorted with criminals of other stocks. The total direct loss caused to the community by this one family is estimated at £260,000, while the indirect loss is probably much greater.

Between these two extremes lie many intermediate examples, some above and some below what may be considered a desirable standard of character. It is almost an axiom that, if we could find some means of encouraging the propagation of people above the standard and of discouraging the propagation of those below it, we would raise the average level considerably. This, in brief, is the practical problem of eugenics; and as it has a close relation to the cure of evil the solutions so far proposed are worth considering.

Under present conditions there is a strong tendency, at least in this country, towards an increase among the unfit as compared with the fit—using these words in the broad sense of ability to carry out the physical, moral, and mental duties of a useful member of society. People who have a high standard of living and are able to exercise restraint tend to marry later in life, and to have

fewer children than is the custom among the less desirable ranks of society. If natural selection were operating with full rigour, the greater fertility of the lower types would be corrected by a higher mortality; but in place of natural selection we have built up an elaborate system of care for the unfit. In Dr. Tredgold's words:—

> It is impossible to look round without seeing that the entire country, from John o' Groats to Land's End, is flooded with institutions, societies, and agencies, not for the betterment of the fit, but for the care of the unfit—agencies whose chief mission is to provide shelter, food, clothing, comforts, medical treatment, and other forms of assistance for those of proved mental, physical, and social incapacity; and even for those who, having the capacity, will not exert it.....I have no hesitation in saying, from personal experience, that nowadays the degenerate offspring of the feeble-minded and chronic pauper is treated with more solicitude, has better food, clothing, and medical attention, and has greater advantages, than the child of the respectable and independent working man. So much is this the case that people are beginning to realize that thrift, honesty, and self-denial do not pay.

This elaborate system of charity is not only an immediate burden upon the better types of family, but it is an increasing handicap upon progress, because it encourages the propagation of dependent types. Here we have a good example of how an attempted cure for evil may give rise to greater evils than those it is intended to alleviate. The maintenance of the unfit is, from the social standpoint, an evil if it is not accompanied by a definite discouragement of breeding by the unfit. Eugenists

therefore recommend compulsory detention in such extreme cases as the feeble-minded and the habitual criminal. A Royal Commission also came to this conclusion, but, like most Royal Commissions, it proved barren of results. We still discharge the feeble-minded from school at the age of sixteen, and thus make more work for the prison, the poor-house, and the maternity wards.

As for habitual criminals, the Prison Commissioners have emphasized that a large proportion of them suffer from some mental defect. They come of an unsound stock, and the unsoundness may show itself, among their relatives and descendants, in the form of feeble-mindedness, alcoholism, or tuberculosis, as well as in irresistible criminal tendencies. Our present method of dealing with habitual criminals is to impose a series of short sentences, between which they are free to prey on society and also to propagate their kind. This method is not only useless as a cure for criminality or a safeguard for the community, but it is a means of multiplying parasitic individuals of one kind or another. Here again, therefore, the eugenist recommends permanent detention—not necessarily under penal conditions. In some American States the actual sterilization of the feeble-minded and the habitual criminal has been advocated, but this process is rather too drastic to meet with general favour.

Compulsion in any form is, however, impossible as well as undesirable for the control of propagation among the majority of people. There appear to

be only two influences upon which we can rely for encouraging the fertility of the fit and, conversely, discouraging the multiplication of the unfit. One is the development of sound public opinion, based upon a clear knowledge of the facts of heredity. Many people sin against society for lack of this knowledge, and others because the world is apathetic towards unlimited breeding from unsound stock. Although some phases of heredity are obscure, we know enough of the general laws of inheritance to create a strong influence for good by making everybody acquainted with these laws. During the nineteenth century the pioneer efforts of a small group of humanitarians led to the growth of a widespread feeling of active sympathy for the unfortunate members of society. What is needed now is to control the humanitarian feeling by a clear conception of its remote results. We cannot cure humanity of evil merely by binding up its wounds; we must consider the race as one organism, living on from generation to generation.

The other influence is less direct. To some extent the rate at which any section of the community tends to propagate itself depends upon the financial and legislative burdens thrown upon that section. Within the last generation or two there has been an attempt to redress the inequalities of existence by making the more fortunate pay heavily for the benefit of the less fortunate. Free education, national insurance, privilege fares on railways and tramways, assisted housing schemes—these are some of the directions in which the stocks which have

shown capability and thrift are made to subsidize the stocks which have shown less of these and kindred qualities.

The purely ethical aspect of this arrangement is not for the moment in question, any more than the political aspect. What concerns us is simply its effect on fertility. Long before the War there was a marked tendency for middle-class families to be strictly limited. Every one of us can point to cases of parents who, although themselves members of large families, restricted their own children to two or three. They found it impossible, in short, to maintain a large family and at the same time contribute heavily in rates and taxes to the maintenance of other people's families. Since the War the situation has been very much aggravated by the great increase in taxation and in the cost of all commodities. This increase bears much more heavily on the middle classes than on any other section of the community, as their income has not increased in anything like the same proportion as the wages of the manual workers, who receive the largest share of the benefits already indicated. The result must be a still stronger tendency to limit the children of stocks which have shown greater mental power and a higher capacity of moral restraint than the less successful stocks.

The theory underlying this kind of differential taxation is, of course, that assistance given to the less successful will enable them to raise themselves to a higher level. Environment, in a word, is assumed to be all-powerful. Unfortunately, how-

ever, an improvement effected by environment on one generation is not transmitted to the next. The factor of heredity is a stubborn one; and if we desire to breed a better race we must keep that factor constantly in the foreground. Social legislation for the cure of evil becomes merely the source of greater evil if it multiplies the numbers who will require its benefits and reduces the numbers who are able to spare something from the results of labour and skill to confer these benefits.

Eugenics, therefore, points to some method of easing the burden of taxation in proportion to the increase in the families among the better-endowed sections of the community. In this democratic age such a suggestion appears reactionary; but we have been too ready to apply the word democracy, in matters of taxation and legislation, to the masses of wage-earners rather than to the community as a whole. Democracy, it may be observed, is yet on its trial; and its trial will be a severe one if its practical tendency is to change the character of the people from one generation to another by increasing both the relative numbers requiring assistance and the degree of assistance. To attain a permanent cure of poverty and its brood of evils we must surely proceed in exactly the opposite direction.

Whatever we may think of any of the precise suggestions made in the name of eugenics, it will be admitted that selective breeding would be a most valuable instrument in dealing with the problem of evil. We are fond of saying that in man the process of evolution has become conscious. Being aware of

the process upon which the whole future of the race depends, why should he not use his knowledge to control the process for the benefit of humanity?

Most of the achievements and possibilities discussed in this chapter are comparatively new. Theological and metaphysical notions of evil are old, and the methods of treatment based on them have been in force for many, many generations without giving man the hope of relief from the ancestral burden which oppresses him. Heaven and hell, praise and punishment, have been applied in a multitude of forms without affecting the root of the disease. We have striven to show that by studying the natural history of evil we gain the first essential of any useful treatment of the problem—a clearer understanding of its true character. And we have also striven to show that the scientific study of the human machine opens up more than one way by which the working of that machine can be improved. If it were necessary to put the secret of success into one word, that word would be *knowledge*—not faith, nor revelation, nor intuition, nor any of the transcendental processes to which saints and visionaries turned for consolation, but knowledge gained by tracing the footsteps of man back into the immemorable past, back through the long series of changing life-forms to the primeval single cell; knowledge gained by probing the depths of the unconscious mind where the unresting passions have their home; knowledge which grows day by day under the labours of men who, while the Fathers

discourse on free will, predestination, and the will of God, are content to observe, to test, to experiment, to add one little fact to man's understanding of man.

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